



# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

## **THESIS**

**ENHANCING NATIONAL SECURITY IN JAMAICA  
THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT  
OF SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES.**

by

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June 2005

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**ENHANCING NATIONAL SECURITY IN JAMAICA THROUGH THE  
DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT OF SPECIAL FORCES**

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## **ABSTRACT**

While SOF are commonly identified with the pursuit of foreign policy, they may also be used within the domestic security infrastructure. Given the long-practiced use of the military in developing countries in internal security (inclusive of Jamaica), and given the rise to prominence of transnational threats over traditional threats in Jamaica, a need has arisen for an evolution in the military to adequately meet these new unconventional threats. Such a capability may be embodied in a Special Operations Force properly selected, trained, equipped and organized, to mitigate these irregular threats such as terrorism, illicit arms and narcotics trafficking and organized crime which currently face Jamaica. This study examines the value, utility, and possible roles of such a unit in the Jamaican security landscape, and makes recommendations for the establishment and employment of such a unit in Jamaica.

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# **I. INTRODUCTION**

## **A. BACKGROUND**

In order to attain global security, it is essential to address the issue from the smallest possible element, establishing a firm foundation upon which the framework may be built. Consequently, for global security to be attained, it is necessary to address individual and nation-state security concerns first. By assembling the parts, the whole may be built. The dawning of the twenty-first century arrived with global security and stability threatened. The scare of the Millennium Bug caused people to realize just how vulnerable their lives had become. The terror attacks on the twin towers of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001 hammered home this imperative. Since that fateful day in 2001, nations across the world have sought to address their individual security and stability within the context of the global environment.

Jamaica is one such country seeking to enhance the individual security of its citizens, as well as the corporate security and stability of the state. The Government of Jamaica (GOJ) for the first time embarked in 2004 upon establishing a National Security Strategy (NSS). This strategy is aimed at effectively addressing the threats facing Jamaica in the twenty-first century, and is being developed through consultation with all relevant sections of society.

Upon the conclusion of this exercise, the next step is to conduct a Strategic Defense Review (SDR) to determine the role, functions and capabilities of the Jamaica Defence Force (JDF) within this new strategy. In anticipation of the deliberations of the NSS Working Group (NSWG), and in response to a rapidly changing threat environment, the JDF sought and obtained approval from the GOJ to begin the process of developing the capability to address the looming specter of unconventional threats to the security and stability of the country.

## **B. PURPOSE**

This aim of this project is to specifically examine the potential for the enhancement of national security through the employment of military Special Operations

Forces (SOF), or a unit of similar ilk. It is widely recognized that SOF offer a high degree of utility to political directorates, and that this utility is more often than not associated with the pursuit of foreign policy objectives. It is also recognized that the military forces in developing and underdeveloped countries, are widely used as part of the internal security infrastructure of these countries to mitigate the threats to national security. The degree to which they bring value to the security of the state, vary as widely as the opinions concerning whether or not the military should be involved in routine internal security operations.

It is anticipated that this study will provide pertinent information relevant to the potential that such a grouping will offer the GOJ, as part of the broader national security template, and provide guidance on the establishment, roles, and operational control of SOF in Jamaica.

### **C. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY**

In order to address the topic adequately, this project will of necessity have to cover a number of areas. It is intended to first review the roles, responsibilities, and capabilities of the JDF and the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF), as well as other national security agencies, against the background of the threats facing Jamaica. Using the NSS deliberations as a basis, it will seek to identify gaps in the security apparatus where there are no (or inadequate) provisions/response mechanisms to deal with the threats facing Jamaica. It will examine the role of an elite unit tasked for special operations as part of the internal security apparatus of developing countries, with a view to determining whether or not Jamaica would benefit from the establishment of such a grouping. It will also review the employment of SOF as a tool of strategic leverage and national power, and its conceptual application to national security problems. An intuitive comparison of the roles and functioning of SOF with those of conventional security forces will be undertaken, in order to make a determination whether or not such a grouping is required in Jamaica to combat the major threats facing the country. If such a grouping is required, recommendations as to the employment and functioning of the grouping will be put forward.

Select case studies will be examined and evaluated for the potential application of those experiences to the Jamaican scenario. Having concluded the foregoing, it is anticipated that relevant findings and recommendations will be presented in furtherance of the goal.

This thesis will employ an inductive approach to the role of SOF in a national security context. The methodology used in this thesis research will consist of the following steps.

1. Conduct a thorough review of the theory and application of SOF roles, particularly in National Security as against SOF as a tool of foreign policy attainment.
2. Analyze selected case studies of countries that employ SOF in national security roles.
3. Conduct interviews and surveys of persons and organizations integrally involved with the use of SOF in national security.
4. Examine the current threat assessment for Jamaica and match it with current capabilities.
5. Identify gaps between requirements and capabilities to determine the need, if any, of the potential role(s) and structure of SOF.
6. Use the case studies to assist in this determination.

#### **D. ORGANIZATION OF STUDY**

The remainder of this chapter will detail the layout of the study and define some of the terms critical to understanding the framework of the study. Chapter II will first identify the threats facing Jamaica based on the NSS, and then examine the capabilities of the various security agencies of the state in meeting these threats adequately, in order to determine if there is a gap in matching capabilities to requirements. Finally, it will conduct a brief review of “special units/squads” within the JDF and the JCF as a means of assessing the effectiveness of such units in addressing national security problems in the past. Chapter III will focus on the use of SOF in national security issues. Chapter IV will present selected case studies of countries that have used SOF in national security and extrapolate their relevance to the Jamaican situation. Chapter V will conclude with

the findings and recommendations about the potential for a SOF capability within a JDF structure designed to meet the threats facing Jamaica.

## **E. DEFINITION OF TERMS**

In order to launch this study with transparency and to limit the potential for confusion, it is necessary to begin by defining some of the key terms and concepts to be used throughout this study. A more comprehensive glossary of terms is included as Appendix A to this thesis.

### National Security

The concept of national security is much wider than the defense of Jamaica's borders or its territorial integrity. It is the total preservation of our State: our political, economic and social well-being, the inviolability of our territorial boundaries and the maintenance of national interests.<sup>1</sup>

### Special Operations

Operations conducted by specially organized, trained and equipped military and paramilitary forces to achieve military, political, economic or psychological objectives by unconventional military means in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive areas...<sup>2</sup>

### Special Operations Forces

Are small, elite military units with special training and equipment that can infiltrate into hostile territory through land, sea, or air to conduct a variety of operations...<sup>3</sup>

### Conventional Forces,

[differ from Special Operations Forces] in degree of risk, operational technique, mode of employment, independence from friendly support and dependence on detailed operational intelligence and indigenous assets (USCINCSOC *Operational Concept*, 1989, p. 1-8).

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from an unpublished draft document produced by the Ministry of National Security, Jamaica.

<sup>2</sup> Edited from "1997 Joint Posture Statement – United States Special Operations Forces", USSOCOM, 1997, in *US Special Forces in Action*, Thomas K. Adams (1998).

<sup>3</sup> Taken from CRS Report for Congress, *U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF): Background and Issues for Congress* by Andrew Feickert, specialist in National Defense Foreign Affairs, Defense and Trade Division dated September 28, 2004.

## **F. CONCLUSION**

Jamaica is on the threshold of a new era of addressing its security issues. As the country goes forward into the twenty-first century, it is imperative that it be prepared to meet the threats to its stability and security with adequate response mechanisms. As a country espousing the principles of democracy, it must ensure the respect of the underpinnings of such a society, while being able to effectively negate any and every threat that rises against it. It must leverage all of its resources and assets against any credible threat, making use of global best practices in this regard, and learning from the experiences of others who have already ventured down such a path. It is anticipated, that as the research proceeds, it will lead in a logical manner to the relevance, or lack thereof, of SOF in the Jamaican security environment. The conclusions of this study, it is hoped, will provide guidance for the development of the force structure of the JDF as it seeks to meet its mandate for the twenty-first century.

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## **II. THREATS TO NATIONAL SECURITY AND AN OVERVIEW OF JAMAICAN SECURITY FORCES**

### **A. MAJOR THREATS TO NATIONAL SECURITY IN JAMAICA**

The development of a National Security Strategy (NSS) for Jamaica in 2005 represents an effort by the Government of Jamaica (GOJ) to outline overarching policies on national security, and aims to enhance coordination and cooperation among the various ministries and agencies which have roles to play in this regard. It seeks to address a broad spectrum of threats, inclusive of military, social, economic and environmental threats that have the potential to negatively affect the security of Jamaica.<sup>4</sup> Given the focus of this exercise, the threats to be closely examined in this section, are those for which it is conceivable that a military solution is possible, and more specifically, those threats which conceivably may require the employment of Special Operations Forces (SOF) to mitigate them.

The JDF has had a long history of acting in aid to the civil powers in areas such as crime fighting, counter-narcotics, quelling internal unrest and disturbances, search and rescue (SAR), Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) protection, and disaster mitigation and response. The NSS Working Group (NSWG) foresees a continuation of these roles, in addition to emerging new roles such as counter-terrorism, as the GOJ seeks to develop and adjust its security response capabilities in the face of the threats identified by the NSS. The main threats identified by NSWG committee members include, [high internal crime levels inclusive of and fuelled in part by] transnational organized crime, illicit trafficking [arms and drugs], and international terrorism. The significance of these threats is compounded by the “ineffectiveness of law enforcement in Jamaica, and the tendency by the general public, to view the police and military as the only agencies responsible for national security”.<sup>5</sup>

The trafficking of arms and ammunition is an inherent part of the drug trade, and contributes significantly to the high levels of crime in Jamaica. The drug trade in turn is

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<sup>4</sup> Although the NSS has not yet been completed, data referring to its development was obtained from interviews with persons involved in the development and drafting of the strategy over the period 17 – 25 Feb 05.

<sup>5</sup> As viewed by the Report of the National Committee on Crime and Violence (2002), p. 14.

a sub-set of some of the organized crime syndicates, which are also intimately involved in extortion rackets, kidnapping and the corruption of public officials and institutions. Sullivan and Bunker (2002, pp. 44 – 53)) summarize the dynamics of these elements:

...as drug cartels, street gangs and warlords move from hierarchical to ‘internetted’ international criminal actors, they pose an increasingly insidious threat to the legitimacy and even solvency to the state as they are refining their ability to co-opt, corrupt and challenge State institutions.

While these areas represent traditional areas of responsibility for the police, the JDF has consistently, if not routinely, been called upon to assist in combating these problem areas, and will most likely continue to perform these tasks in the foreseeable future.

Superimposed upon the longstanding effects of violent crimes, the threat of terrorism is more recent in the catalogue of threats facing Jamaica. The terrorist attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 served to highlight the vulnerability of Jamaica to both the direct and indirect threats of terrorism. The NSWG identifies hostage taking, hijacking, and various narco-terrorism incidents, among others, as the direct threats of terrorism to Jamaica. The indirect consequences are equally as grave and more widespread. The likelihood of terrorist acts occurring are heightened by the “acknowledged inadequacy in Jamaica’s intelligence and monitoring systems particularly with regards to the co-ordinating mechanisms to share information locally, regionally and internationally, ... the lack of preparedness of security agencies and key government institutions, ... [and] insufficient specialist training in anti-terrorism measures” (unpublished Ministry of National Security draft document).

These threats must be effectively countered if the GOJ is to provide the kind of environment which will facilitate the achievement of its national goals. A review of the various agencies and actors in the security sector is aimed at identifying the capabilities and gaps in requirements highlighted by the NSS in relation to these threats, ultimately leading to a determination of whether or not the use of SOF will contribute to mitigating these threats.



## **B. THE JAMAICA CONSTABULARY FORCE**

### **1. Organization**

The Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) was established in 1865 after the Morant Bay Rebellion and has undergone several organizational changes throughout its history. In its current disposition, the force is organized around the four broad portfolios of operations, administration and support services, crime, and special projects; each headed by a Deputy Commissioner. Operationally, the JCF is organized upon the basic unit of a police division. These divisions, commanded by an Acting Commissioner or Senior Superintendent of Police (ACP/SSP), have specific responsibility for a geographical area and are further broken down into smaller areas which are served by police stations. These divisions are supported by a number of police agencies which may be superimposed upon any division, either independently, or in support of that division. These include the Special Branch (intelligence gathering and dissemination), Crime Management Unit, Forensic Laboratory, Bureau of Special Investigation, Fraud Squad, Canine Division, Protective Services, and the National Firearm and Drug Intelligence Center, among others.

### **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

The roles and responsibilities of the force are summarized in Section 13 of the Jamaica Constabulary Act as:

The duties of the Police under this act shall be to keep the watch by day and night; to preserve the peace; to detect crime; apprehend or summon before a Justice, persons found committing any offence, or whom they reasonably suspect of having committed any offence; to serve and execute all summonses, warrants, subpoenas, notices and criminal process issued by any Justice in a criminal matter, and to do and perform all duties appertaining to the office of Constable.

Simply put, the JCF is the government agency tasked with the primary responsibility for maintaining law and order in the island.

### **3. Assessment of Mission Capabilities**

The JCF has a number of functional units which are tasked with providing the capabilities to enable it to meet its mandate. These include the Bureau of Special Investigations (BSI), Child Abuse and Sexual Offences Unit, the Crime Management Centre, the Forensic Laboratory, the Fraud Squad, Narcotics Division, Special Anti-

Crime Task Force (SACTF), and several intelligence agencies (Special Branch, Organized Criminal Investigative Division (OCID), and the National Firearm and Drug Intelligence Centre (NFDIC) among others).

These units operate under significant resource constraints (physical, financial, and human) and are hard pressed to execute their mandate of community policing, responding to crime scenes, detecting and deterring crime in the country, investigating crimes, and presenting the evidence in court. Their inability to operate at maximum efficiency is further compounded by a general lack of trust by the public, corruption (perceived and/or real) within the force, and counter-productive hard policing actions which often result in hardships for the law abiding citizen. Repetitive allegations of extra-judicial killings made by civic action groups against members of the JCF, and the high incidences of police killings complicate the situation even further.

The resultant disinclination of the public at large to cooperate with the Police due to the foregoing leaves a huge void in the JCF intelligence gathering capabilities, further undermining their ability to execute their mission.

Several initiatives including the “JCF Corporate Strategy” (aimed at “...tackling the real priorities, with a professional workforce, acting with integrity, courtesy, fairness and respect.”), the “Citizens Charter”, and the “Police/Citizens Code of Conduct”, are aimed at improving the image and conduct of the JCF and its relationship with the public.<sup>6</sup> Progress has been made on this long journey, and the JCF is committed to transforming itself into an effective force of which the country can be proud.

The JCF does not have a specialized unit capable of tackling extremely violent and unorthodox situations such as hostage or terrorist incidents. Hard policing actions are conducted mainly by those members of the force who by design or default, have been exposed to these situations and who may have developed a reputation for bravado and fearlessness: a minority of members of these units have any formal training in this regard. The Mobile Reserve Unit, formed in 1962 for “quick response to law and order situations” (JCF website), has morphed into a unit that provides manpower augmentation

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<sup>6</sup> Details on these initiatives may be found at the JCF website at <http://www.jamaicapolice.org.jm/> last accessed on 15 Mar 05.

to police divisions and stations as required (routinely or in crisis situations), while retaining a limited capability to respond independently as per its original mandate. In any event, it is neither trained nor equipped for the unconventional genre of operations as described earlier.

While there have been calls for the replacing of a “weak”, “corrupt” and “inefficient” JCF, with a new and improved Jamaica Police Service from several quarters,<sup>7</sup> the JCF is committed to overcoming the stigmas that are linked to it and to becoming a more relevant and effective part of the security apparatus of the country.

## **C. THE JAMAICA DEFENCE FORCE**

### **1. Organization**

The Jamaica Defence Force (JDF) is primarily a light infantry organization charged with the defense of, and the maintenance of order, in the country – a very police-oriented mandate. It consists of one reserve and two regular infantry battalions, along with an engineer regiment, a support/logistic battalion, a small coast guard and an equally small air wing. Formed in 1962, the JDF has developed based on the inherited customs and traditions of the British military, and maintains these organizational and doctrinal similarities to the present day.

### **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

Section 5 of the Defence Act (1962) states that “The Jamaica Defence Force shall be charged with the defence of and maintenance of order in Jamaica and with such other duties as may from time to time be defined by the Defence Board”. The JDF website (Jamaica Defence Force, n.d., Legal Status, Roles and Procedures section) expounds on these other duties which include:

- To aid the civil power in the maintenance of law and order;
- Assistance in the maintenance of essential services (electricity and water supplies, etc.);
- Assistance and protection of the population in the event of disaster;

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<sup>7</sup> These recommendations emanate from officially established national committees examining security in Jamaica such as the National Report on Crime and the Wolfe Report, to civil rights action groups such as Jamaicans for Justice and Amnesty International.

- Law enforcement, safety and environmental protection in Jamaica's maritime zone;
- Support of government sponsored programs whenever practicable, including environmental protection;
- Search and rescue by air, land and sea;
- Assistance to other Caribbean countries when requested and necessary, so as to restore law and order and, in the event of disaster, to assist and protect the civil population;
- Military Ceremonial.

Throughout its history, the JDF has been intimately involved in joint operations with the JCF to maintain law and order in the country; none more illustrative than the state of emergency in Western Kingston over the period 02 Oct – 04 Nov 1966, the island-wide state of emergency in 1976, and the period of 1974 – 1994 governed by the “Suppression of Crimes Act”. The Coast Guard (JDF CG) and Air Wing (JDF AW) are frequently called upon to conduct SAR missions for fishermen lost at sea, and to provide support for the infantry battalions. Over time however (the last decade), the operations of the JDF CG and JDF AW have widened to include drug interdiction operations. The mandate of the JDF CG is even more important in the absence of a functional police maritime capability. Thus, the JDF CG is charged with executing the functions of the constabulary at sea; and is legally empowered to do so. The JDF has come to the assistance of other Caribbean nations during times of political unrest and uncertainty (Grenada 1983, Trinidad 1990, and Haiti 1994-1996), as well as to bring relief from the effects of natural disasters.

In summary the JDF has been the agency of “final resort” when all else fails; whether the situation be one of crime, natural disaster, industrial or social unrest, external/transnational threats, or environmental degradation. The nation has come to depend on the ability of the JDF to intervene and bring meaningful resolution to whatever crisis arises. Having established and built upon this foundation of relevance throughout its history, and in order to meet the expectations of succeeding governments and of the population at large, it is imperative that the JDF continue to prepare itself for likely and

unlikely eventualities, thereby maintaining this relevance. Thus, a review of its current capabilities and the requirements likely to be imposed upon it, specified or implied, should guide the future development, training, and structure of the JDF. The Strategic Defence Review (SDR) – which has already commenced as a logical corollary to the NSS – is geared towards this.

### **3. Assessment of Mission Capabilities**

As with most state agencies in a developing economy, the JDF is challenged in fulfilling its roles and responsibilities due to resource constraints. This however has not deterred it from pursuing its mandate and relying on its most important asset – its human resources – in executing its mission. A continued increase in capability is predicated upon the continued development of the human resources within the JDF, and not necessarily on an inflow of modern equipment.

As a light infantry dominated organization, the JDF is capable of conducting rural and urban conventional operations, either independently or in support of the police. Most of these operations have been of the internal security (IS) genre (cordon and search operations, curfews, raids, rural and urban patrolling, crowd control and anti-riot procedures, etc). Maritime based operations such as interdiction, EEZ protection (to include fisheries and oil spill monitoring) and SAR, are conducted based on the availability and serviceability of assets; air operations face similar challenges. Concurrent with its military/para-military operations the JDF has also been able to contribute to national development objectives, especially in the areas of human resource and physical development (primarily through the Engineer Regiment), as well as fulfilling its ceremonial functions.

The ever increasing tempo of maritime surveillance, interdiction, and enforcement operations, due to the increase in the size and scope of the maritime threats, has stretched the resources of the JDF thin. Continued meaningful operations in this sector, where the transnational threats of arms and narcotics trafficking are most palpable, will require increased resource allocation to the JDF CG and JDF AW. The maturing of local criminal gangs into organized criminal networks presents even greater challenges for the JCF, even with the JDF in support. Enhanced intelligence networking and smaller, more

responsive joint teams (JCF and JDF) are essential to combat these networks. Currently, the JDF does not have a formally structured response mechanism that is capable of effectively dealing with the new and emerging threats; especially the unconventional threat. Creating this capability is essential if the JDF is to be prepared and effective in meeting its mandate.

Given its small size and its significant involvement in internal security operations, the JDF has always been subject to trade-offs between areas competing for resources, based on the designation of priorities. To date, the JDF has met with a fair degree of success in meeting its operational requirements in spite of the resource constraints. The maturing of the unconventional and transnational threats, however, almost demand the development of an unconventional capability, equal (if not greater) to the continued development of diverse capabilities across the wider force.

#### **D. OTHER SECURITY AGENCIES**

Other government agencies such as the Airports Authority, Port Authority, the Jamaica Customs, the Immigration Department, the Port Security Corps, and the Department of Corrections are largely administrative in nature, and rely on the JCF and the courts for the active enforcement of legislation and regulations in their particular sectors of responsibility. Both the Airport Authority and the Port Authority have a statutory requirement to ensure the safety and protection of all property and persons using the air and sea ports of Jamaica. The focus on this requirement has been sharpened since the attacks of 9/11. The members of the Port Security Corps are charged with the execution of this task. Although these officers are sworn in as Special District Constables,<sup>8</sup> in essence, they are simply a first line of response to any potential incident. Jamaica Customs Officers have the statutory powers of search, arrest and prosecution similar to that of a constable, but typically have seldom exercised those powers in the execution of their duties. The formation of the Jamaica Customs Contraband Enforcement Team (CET) in 1998 saw customs officers operating covertly, but with

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<sup>8</sup> Powers are restricted to searching, detaining and prosecuting in a pre-determined geographical locality as determined by their place of employment; as opposed to regular members of the constabulary whose powers are applicable island-wide.

police support, in pursuit of holding persons in breach of the Jamaica Customs Act accountable. Similarly, the Department of Corrections' focus on its ability to provide a secure environment within the country's penal institutions is heavily dependent upon both the JCF and the JDF for responses to crises.

While possessing little or no capability for defending against, or initiating aggressive actions against, threats which involve the use of actual or threatened violence or force, these agencies play an important role as the "eyes and ears" of the intelligence community in their respective areas, and perhaps have their greatest effect as a deterrent force.

Of interest, is the existence of a vibrant private security industry (made necessary by the continuing decline in the security environment in the country) which provides services such as commercial/private armed and unarmed static security, armored courier services and personal escort security services. This "private army" (governed by the Private Security Regulation Authority Act – 1992) which outnumbers the aggregate strength of the JDF and the JCF, has assumed several of the roles which properly are under the auspices of the police and, to a lesser extent, the military, including a quick response capability for immediate threats to the life and property of the citizens of Jamaica.

The Minister of National Security has repeatedly and emphatically stated the greater role in national security required of an ever increasing set of stakeholders, as the country seeks to create and maintain a security environment conducive to the attainment of national goals. The development of the NSS is aimed at providing the direction for this to be achieved, in light of analyzing the threat environment, assessing the current capabilities, and identifying the gaps with a view to closing these gaps. The following section summarizes this exercise to date, in respect to the relevance of SOF, if any, in filling any of these gaps.

#### **E. MATCHING THE REQUIREMENTS WITH CURRENT CAPABILITIES**

The NSWG has outlined the major threats facing Jamaica and identified ten potential Strategic Security Goals (SSGs), aimed at improving the security of the nation

(see Appendices B and C respectively). In meeting these goals, an overarching requirement of the NSS will be an overhaul of the national intelligence infrastructure which will allow for the efficient and effective collection, processing, and dissemination of intelligence at the strategic, operational and tactical levels across agencies. If this is not achieved then attainment of the SSGs will be significantly prejudiced.

Five of the SSGs require military involvement, either in strengthening existing capabilities or developing new ones. These are;

1. Preventing and reducing violent crime and disorder.
2. Eliminating organized criminal networks and countering the proliferation of narco-trafficking and illegal arms.
3. Protecting Jamaica from terrorism.
4. Protecting and controlling Jamaica's territory.
5. Increasing Jamaica's ability to contribute to regional and international security.

With the exception of the third goal listed above, the remainder represent areas in which the JDF is currently involved and has been involved in the past, but which are in need of refocusing and/or strengthening. This strengthening may be achieved through the use of SOF in applying unconventional tactics, procedures, and thinking, to problems for which the JCF and the conventional military forces are either not equipped or are ill-equipped. Arguably, the adequate equipping, training and allocation of adequate resources to the JCF and the conventional forces of the JDF may better serve the nation, thereby negating the need for a SOF unit. While this may be more desirous than unleashing a highly skilled and unorthodox force in the pursuit of the maintenance of law and order in a democratic society, history has shown the prudence in having such a force ready to mitigate problems in a crisis situation.

The NSWG has identified the need for three levels of response in the national security infrastructure as follows:



1. The police acting alone or supported by other state agencies, such as Customs, the Financial Investigative Division and the Department of Corrections, in conducting soft and hard policing actions.
2. Joint operations between the police and the military; in the first instance with police primacy, and in the second instance with military primacy, in the execution of hard policing initiatives.
3. The military acting alone in critical situations requiring the application of military force, tactics and procedures which the other two response levels would not be equipped to handle.

This third level of response intuitively suggests the existence of fertile ground for the establishment of a military unit whose selection, training, equipping and organization prepares them to be flexible enough to effectively address not only the traditional and conventional threats, but also the unusual, eclectic, and unorthodox range of threats surfacing in modern society. Hence, it has been suggested by the NSWG that the JDF be specifically mandated to develop a counter-terrorism capability and to lead in the resolution of terrorist incidents, either with the support of the JCF or independently. This grouping would (logically) also be equally equipped to address myriad other unconventional security threats. However, given the broader implications of the NSS for the JDF's continued involvement in contributing to national security and in aiding the police, there will be need for a concurrent strengthening of the regular units in the JDF to enable them to more effectively take on the traditional roles in support of the JCF, in addition to the formation of a SOF unit.

While these changes are taking place in the military, the police also will be required to refocus their strategies, strengthen existing capabilities, and develop new ones. Chief among the reforms will be the need for activities and conduct aimed at regaining the confidence of the public and eliminating the scourge of corruption currently affecting the force. The development of a Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) unit in the JCF will also provide an additional response mechanism, thereby increasing the range of options open to decision makers in addressing threats. However, given the relative inadequacy (physical, technical, human and organizational) of the JCF relative to the

expectations of the population of Jamaica, and the widening scope of the threats facing the country, it is most likely that the JDF will continue to be intimately involved in the maintenance of law and order in Jamaica.

In light of the foregoing discussion, it is prudent that a historical overview of “special units” in both the JDF and the JCF be undertaken, in order to better understand the context and framework in which any future SOF unit may be perceived by the public and decision makers alike in Jamaica.

#### **F. SPECIAL UNITS/SQUADS IN THE JAMAICAN SECURITY FORCES**

Since obtaining independence in 1962, Jamaica has seen the formation and disbandment of several “special squads” in both the military and the police.<sup>9</sup> These units were established in reaction to prevailing conditions such as social unrest, surges in the crime rate and an increase in narcotics trafficking. The Mobile Reserve Unit of the Jamaica Constabulary Force was formed to suppress riots and illegal demonstrations, and to engage in other “hard policing” activities as required. Thus, the 1965 Chinese riots and the limited state of emergency in Western Kingston in 1966 saw the Mobile Reserve being called into action. Other police special units such as “Operations Base”, “Echo Squad”, the Special Anti-Crime Task Force (SACTF), the Organized Crime Unit, and the Crime Management Unit (CMU), were all established to reduce the ever-increasing crime rate. While these units met with some tactical successes, there was not a reduction in the crime rate, neither was there an increase in the clear up rate for cases, nor an increase in convictions won by the state against persons accused of criminal offences. Colonel (Ret’d) Trevor McMillan posits that these units were unsuited for addressing the problem for several reasons: the root causes of crime were not being addressed; these squads were not supported by the requisite levels of intelligence, and; the criminal justice system was neither efficient nor effective.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Due to significant voids in documentation relating to “special squads” in Jamaica, most of the information in this section was obtained by conducting interviews with persons who served in these special squads or had intimate knowledge of these squads but declined to be named.

<sup>10</sup> Col McMillan, a former senior officer in the JDF and who subsequently served as the Commissioner of Police (1993 – 1996), indicated these thoughts in an interview with the author on 22 Mar 05 in Kingston, Jamaica.

The JDF had a brief experiment with a “special squad” in the late 1970’s. With a proliferation of illegal airstrips and aircraft aimed at increasing the trafficking of drugs out of Jamaica, the JDF was mandated to establish a small team which was to be primarily concerned with the interdiction of these aircraft. Within a year of their formation, and having achieved a fair measure of success in this specific mission, the size and mandate of the group was increased/widened to include sting operations against known criminals and other operations in support of the JCF, for which a high degree of success was required. The Suppression of Crimes Act (1974) allowed the JDF to conduct operations independently of the police and it provided the legal basis for launching these operations.<sup>11</sup> This experiment did not last long, however, as the unit was disbanded in 1978 after the Green Bay “massacre” in which a number of men (civilians) who were allegedly involved with an increase in crime in central Kingston, were killed by members of the unit in an undercover operation which went sour.

From all accounts the selection of persons to these “special units” (in both the JCF and the JDF), were based on individual bravado and physical ability, and to a lesser extent specialist skills and formal training. At the outset, training was a priority for these units, but was pushed down the totem pole as the operational tempo increased. This increase came about as a result of decision makers viewing these units as a panacea for every problem which arose. These units developed a reputation for aggressiveness and in some cases, extra-judicial actions.<sup>12</sup> The unprofessional conduct of these units, public outrage and internal (MNS/JCF/JDF) reviews, have all contributed to most of these units “falling on their own swords”. Monikers such as “the Dirty Dozen” and “the Death Squad”, and the alleged affiliation with, and abuse by politicians of these groups for partisan reasons, have re-enforced a generally negative perception in the minds of the public when the conduct of such units is considered. The current Commissioner of Police, Mr Lucius Thomas suggests that this negative perception will only be changed by the actions of these special squads themselves. He posits that these units must act in a

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<sup>11</sup> The Act was repealed in 1994.

<sup>12</sup> Civil and human rights groups such as Amnesty International and Jamaicans for Justice have been at the forefront of such claims over the last decade.

professional and transparent manner, operating under a system of checks and balances, which inspire the confidence of the public.<sup>13</sup>

Special squads in Jamaica have not had the strategic impact they could have had if properly employed and controlled. A lack of strategic thought in the employment of SOF, their *modus operandi*, accountability and chain of command, have all contributed to undermining their utility and ability to effectively contribute to the improvement of the security environment in Jamaica. Their tactical successes have been only of a short term nature, and their relevance as significant contributors to national security in the long term may be considered as directly proportional to their short, attenuated lifespan. Any attempt at meaningfully employing SOF (strategically, operationally and tactically) in the future in pursuing national security goals in Jamaica, will require their inclusion in an overarching strategic concept, the way such units conduct themselves, and, based on past experiences, significant changes in the way they are viewed and handled within the JCF, JDF and the political directorate.

## **G. CHAPTER SUMMARY**

While the traditional threats to security in Jamaica have not disappeared, the emergence of transnational threats such as arms and narcotics trafficking, terrorism, and organized crime, have moved to the fore and demanded a more holistic and integrated response. The traditional agencies of the state responsible for ensuring the security of the state (the JCF and JDF), are neither equipped nor organized to meet these new threats in an effective manner, nor can they do it alone. Transforming these state agencies to meet these threats will be crucial to securing an environment in which national goals and objectives can be met. Given the complex and at times unorthodox environments surrounding these threats, and their implications for national security, it would be wise for the establishment of a SOF unit to be considered as part of the security infrastructure geared towards negating these threats. Given the history of “special squads” in Jamaica however, any attempt in this regard will require significant efforts in developing a credible, efficient, accountable, well-led, and properly utilized force, capable of showing

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<sup>13</sup> These opinions were solicited by the author in an interview with Commissioner Thomas and members of his staff at JCF Headquarters, Kingston, Jamaica on 24 Mar 05.

their relevance to the provision of security for the society, and erasing the unpleasant memories of the past. The following chapter will seek to identify ways in which this may be accomplished, and the value and utility of employing a SOF unit in the pursuit of national security.

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### **III. USE OF SPECIAL FORCES IN NATIONAL SECURITY**

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

SOF, perhaps since the first half of the Twentieth Century, have been used to augment conventional forces and to take on peculiar taskings outside the capabilities of these conventional forces. They have been used in conventional conflicts deep behind enemy lines to strike at critical enemy positions and logistical targets. They have been used to open corridors of attack for conventional forces, as well as for conducting reconnaissance and providing intelligence.

Despite their well known achievements in conventional warfare, SOF have carved out a niche for themselves in the field of irregular warfare. Their relatively small size and units of operation, their flexibility and adaptability, and their high level of military skills and proficiency, have made them an attractive tool for politicians and military commanders seeking solutions to peculiar problems; both military and political. Consequently, SOF have become synonymous with dealing with threats such as insurgencies, hostage taking, terrorism, kidnapping, POW rescue, raiding, and regime overthrow.

What is less known, is the contribution which SOF can make to a country's domestic security. The aim of this chapter is to outline the character and nature of SOF, which allow them to offer their masters the strategic leverage and utility required to gain the upper hand in a variety of domestic circumstances. Although typically used as an instrument in executing a nation's foreign policy, this chapter will examine the application and the use of SOF in pursuing domestic policy objectives; particularly within the context of developing countries where domestic policy normally overshadows foreign policy. It will also attempt to address some of the challenges associated with the employment of SOF in general and, more specifically, in their employment as part of the national security strategy of a country within its borders.

## **B. CHARACTER OF SPECIAL FORCES**

Cohen (1978, pp. 17 - 18) lists three characteristics which help to define the nature of elite units: units that are perpetually assigned special or unusual missions that are – or appear to be – extremely hazardous; units that conduct missions requiring few men who meet high standards of training and physical fitness; and units that display high levels of bravery and possess a reputation for success.

Joint Publication 3-05 *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations* (Dec 2003, p. vii), describes special operations as “... [Relying] on individual and small unit proficiency in a multitude of specialized, often non-conventional combat skills applied with adaptability, improvisation, innovation and self-reliance.”

Gray (1996, p.164), describes special operations as “... expressions of agility, maneuver, and finesse. They are also high-risk endeavors.” He further states that special operations offer military utility in the categories of economy of force and in the expansion of choice. (p. 168)

SOF by nature are an exclusive grouping. Their defining characteristics give them a special place within the military landscape and offer increased strategic, operational and tactical utility to political authorities and military commanders. This increased military utility, when combined with the utility of conventional forces, can result in a significant advantage when dealing with a specific problem and is very often the tipping point in a campaign, operation or tactical action. Gray (1996) argues that “... special operations forces are of greatest strategic utility in peacetime or in low intensity conflicts, which are the contexts wherein they uniquely provide military or paramilitary options to policymakers with acute security problems” (p. 185). The strategic value of special operations is often determined by the impact “of tactical activity on the course and outcome of a conflict” (Gray, 1996, p. 148).

SOF embody that enduring principle of war – economy of force – to the n<sup>th</sup> degree. Paradoxically, while reducing the requirement for large forces, SOF act as a force multiplier and offer an expansion of options available to political and military leaders. Worldwide, SOF have been associated with a variety of military operations.



These include, direct action, special reconnaissance, unconventional warfare, counter-terrorism, and information operations.

The “smallness” of SOF often has a direct bearing on their mission profiles and use/misuse. According to Cohen (1978), the general rule of thumb is that, whenever SOF constitutes approximately five percent of a country’s land forces, they tend to usurp missions from regular forces.<sup>14</sup> Accordingly, SOF must be utilized with great discipline and the temptation to use them wantonly must be curbed. This will be discussed further in this chapter.

Finally, the success of SOF is dependent upon that concept so highly espoused by Napoleon, Jomini and Clausewitz; “to be superior at the decisive spot” (Gray, 1996, p. 147).<sup>15</sup> McRaven (1996) aptly describes this as attaining relative superiority over the enemy.<sup>16</sup>

### **C. THE CHALLENGES OF EMPLOYING SPECIAL FORCES**

For all the benefits and utility which SOF offer, they do carry their fair share of risks, and possess inherent characteristics that may be inimical to their intended purpose and utility. It is therefore critical, that those charged with the responsibility of controlling and directing the use of SOF, possess a thorough knowledge of their working in order to surmount these challenges.

Some of the challenges associated with the employment of SOF include, the abuse/misuse of SOF, skill drain from regular forces, the committing of atrocities, subversion of the chain of command, and abuse by politicians with a romanticized view of SOF. This milieu of potential negatives associated with SOF will be examined in further detail, with a view to identifying ways in which these challenges may be diminished.

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<sup>14</sup> Cohen indicates that this often occurs in combination with high publicity, and may also be affected by their success rate and their being viewed as a panacea for any problem; particularly by politicians.

<sup>15</sup> Being superior at the decisive spot, rests in large measure with an ability to overcome the Clausewitzian concept of “friction” in conflict.

<sup>16</sup> By employing the principles of simplicity, security, repetition, speed, purpose and surprise, and combining them with Clausewitz’ moral factors of courage, boldness, intellect and perseverance, SOF can overcome the frictions of war and attain relative superiority for a limited time.

## 1. Misuse

Winters and Paro (1994) present a theory to demonstrate the misuse of SOF. They demonstrate this principle based on the Expected Value (EV) and the Expected Cost (EC) associated with the execution of a specific mission for any given force type.<sup>17</sup> In summary they posit that misuse occurs when “SOF are used while GPF [General Purpose Forces] have an absolute and comparative advantage, or SOF are not used while they have an absolute and comparative advantage over GPF” (p. 7).<sup>18</sup> This theory presents a useful guide in the employment of SOF in pursuit of any particular mission or operation.

Gray (1996, p. 185) proposes answering four questions that can help in determining whether or not SOF should be employed: “(1) What is it that only SOF can do? (2) What is it that SOF can do well? (3) What is it that SOF tend to do poorly? (4) What is it that SOF cannot do at all?” Making such a determination will reduce the risk of the misuse of SOF and simultaneously increase the likelihood of mission success.

Cohen (1978, pp. 97 - 100) indicates that there are three principles which can reduce the risk of SOF being misused. Firstly, SOF missions must be strictly defined and the troops themselves must be clear as to their role and mandate. Secondly, the autonomy normally associated with SOF and which is necessary at times for the speed and flexibility required for mission success, must be balanced with the appropriate control mechanisms to keep SOF focused within their mandate. Thirdly, in order to maintain the proper basis of civil-military relations, politicians must exercise restraint and resist the temptation to be amateur soldiers. Gray (1996, p.149) confirms this principle when he states that:

First-class special operations forces have the potential for great strategic utility, but political leaders and strategists must understand how to realize that potential.

A failure to properly use SOF can have disastrous consequences. While Gray’s template was forwarded in 1996 and relevant to the dominance of small wars, it has

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<sup>17</sup> See Edward G. Winters and Kent A. Paro, 1994, *The Misuse of Special Operations Forces*, for a comprehensive analysis of the misuse of SOF.

<sup>18</sup> For the definitions of comparative and absolute advantage, see Appendix A.

assumed even greater import, as states seek ways and means of addressing the far more challenging issues of terrorism and other transnational threats arising in the world today.

## **2. Skill Drain**

Elite units have often, and in some cases justifiably, been accused of taking the best and most highly skilled personnel from conventional units. The potential for this to occur must be actively guarded against. Bearing in mind the principle of complementarity between SOF and GPF, a reduction in the skills, professionalism and capacities of conventional forces through “defection” to SOF, will result in an overall unbalanced force structure with significant implications for joint operations. Not only can the “brain drain” affect the physical readiness of conventional forces, but it can equally render significant psychological damage to these forces. A depleted GPF in favor of SOF will logically suffer from a lowering of morale leading to the dangerous condition of malaise setting in amongst the regular troops. The ineffectiveness of demoralized fighting forces has been well documented throughout history. Morale reduced by any reason is a threat to any military grouping. The countervailing effect of this degradation of GPF is the over-reliance on and over-burdening of SOF, out of a desire to achieve “mission success”, in the face of inadequately prepared GPF.

The school of thought that SOF can act as a “training ground” or “leader nursery” for the regular forces bears some merit; especially in larger militaries. However, based on the operational tempo of the SOF, and in the absence of a formal rotation of elite troops between SOF and GPF, this may not be possible. If this concept is to bear fruit, it must be specifically stated as a mission of the SOF and followed through on; as in the establishment of a training wing/cadre, part of whose mandate would be to provide specific training modules for GPF.

“Skimming off the cream” from regular forces to SOF in small militaries has far greater implications than in larger organizations. Care must be taken to maintain a balance in such a situation, thereby preserving the combat readiness of both GPF and SOF to successfully execute their missions.

## **3. Atrocities**

Cohen (1978, pp. 76 - 77) indicates that a number of factors may contribute to the creation of an environment which facilitates the committal of atrocities by SOF. These

include involvement in high risk operations where battlefield intelligence is vital (thereby presenting torture as a reasonable action); the elite psyche of SOF troops falsely imbuing them with a sense of immunity from the law; the cultivation of toughness and aggressiveness in elite units; the lack of adequate monitoring of SOF operating outside the normal chain of command, and the familial connections and sense of brotherhood between elite unit members precluding the reporting of atrocities.

While there is insufficient data to validate these assumptions, it would be foolish to ignore the logical reasoning behind them. Instead, it would be more prudent to institute measures that would reduce the risk of these conditions maturing. Such measures may include the launching of operations only on specific intelligence, the development of high professional standards backed up by thorough training in the Law of Armed Conflict, and the establishment of rigorous oversight and control mechanisms.

#### **4. Subversion of the Chain of Command**

Given the strategic value that SOF offer the civilian authorities, the potential exists for the creation of an alternate or parallel chain of command. In fact, Cohen (1978, p. 48) indicates that, “The movements of a small unit may now be directed from political headquarters – and often are.” While recognizing the primacy of civilian control over the military in democratic societies, and the possibility and remit of such civilian authorities in directing the operations of SOF in particular circumstances, every effort must be made to keep this to a minimum and to utilize the normal military chain of command in the employment of SOF. This will reduce the likelihood of confusion within the SOF, arising from orders at variance with each other from more than one legitimate source.

However, restricting SOF to the existing military chain of command can also be counter-productive and create problems. These include dealing with the frictions and jealousies normally associated with SOF/GPF relationships, and a lack of understanding about the use of SOF within existing conventional chains. Thus, the “SOF option” may never reach key decision makers, but rather be squashed from the very outset by “conventional” thinkers within the military.

An alternate (political) chain of command may also be abused by politicians and misguided SOF commanders with predictably negative results. The *Palmach* (Israeli SOF), immediately after Israel's independence in 1948, literally refused to obey orders from outside the unit. The end result was a protracted period of infighting in the Israeli military, and between the *Palmach* and Prime Minister Ben Gurion: this was finally ended with the *Palmach* being abolished.<sup>19</sup>

An elite unit operating outside a unified chain of command presents a higher risk for seizing power from the civilian authorities, as is borne out in the failed attempt of some units of the French Foreign Legion and Paratroops to stage a *coup d'état* through an airborne assault on Paris (Cohen, 1978).<sup>20</sup> A unified chain of command will reduce the risk of SOF playing off alternate command structures against each other to achieve their own ends, or to simply adopt an approach which may be outside their mandate.

#### **D. APPLICATION OF SPECIAL FORCES TO DOMESTIC POLICY**

The military forces in developing countries around the world are intricately interwoven into the fabric of those societies. Very often they play a significant role in assisting the constabulary in the maintenance of law and order. Their involvement ranges from routine policing duties, through carrying out essential services during times of crisis and labor unrest, to the more direct and offensive oriented military type actions to thwart violent upheavals and surges in the crime rate within the country.

More and more, the threats to national security within borders have evolved from purely internal conditions, to the current epoch where transnational threats such as the trafficking of illicit substances and arms, organized crime, terrorism, separatism, rogue radical factions, and kidnapping are becoming the norm rather than the exception, and are having a direct impact on internal security. The current threats to national security in developing countries have advanced far beyond the traditional threats of civil unrest and high levels of crime (Griffith, 2003a).

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<sup>19</sup> This took place during intense fighting with the Arabs, no doubt proving an unnecessary distraction for the Israeli Army, as well as diminishing the capacities of the Israeli Army during the conflict.

<sup>20</sup> This failed as the attempt did not have the support of all the SOF forces, nor did the Air Force, Navy, nor the conscript elements of the French military, support the *coup d'état*.

Most developing countries are seeking ways to effectively address these threats as they seek to ensure the safety and security of the citizenry, and the stability and economic development of the nation. Traditional responses to national security threats, in the form of the local police and the military, are often ill-equipped to sufficiently neutralize or defeat these threats. Thus, Gray (1996, p. 143) states that, "... countries frequently have created special operations forces precisely to provide qualities which the national regular forces lack." In the creation of these forces there must be a strategic grasp of what is required of special operations forces. Gray (1996, p.189) states that;

That concept has to identify tersely and accurately what is distinctive and what is distinctly valuable about those forces. The concept must stake out a unique mission or mission area and preferably provide some general clues to the basic nature of special operations forces, yet it should not be framed so as to be competitive with other distinctive elements of military power.<sup>21</sup>

Moreso, the tasking of SOF will largely be based on what the political directorate determines to be the "national interests. Gray lists five well-established primary missions of SOF – "foreign internal defense, special reconnaissance, direct action, counterterrorism, and unconventional warfare" (1996, p. 190). With the exception of the first, all missions are capable of being executed within a country's borders, as well as being indicative of specific, direct actions. The determination by the GOJ, as outlined by the Minister of National Security in 2004, that the illicit transshipment of drugs and weapons, terrorism, and organized crime and its associated components, are the major threats facing Jamaica,<sup>22</sup> will thus assist in determining the structure and role of any SOF created. The tone and context of the minister's statements indicate that these threats are prejudicial to the vital interests of the country and that the current security apparatus is ill-equipped to counter them.<sup>23</sup>

Those threats that require aggressive military oriented actions to negate them are stimulating the creation and decisive employment of elite military units to counter them.

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<sup>21</sup> This elaborates on an earlier version of this theme as enunciated by Samuel P. Huntington in May 1954.

<sup>22</sup> These threats are contained in a statement attributed to the Minister of National Security as reported by Garwin Davis in an article for the *Jamaica Gleaner* on 27 Mar 04.

<sup>23</sup> The term 'vital interests' should be understood as those "so important that they are worth fighting to defend" as described by Buzan, Waever & de Wilde (1998) in *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*.

The use of elite military units in democratic societies to engage in policing functions is usually viewed suspiciously. Claims of potential human rights abuses, retreating from democratic principles, and regime overthrow are all part of the hue and cry which tend to meet such a policy. It is only when the tangible threats to these democratic societies have successfully been negated by such elite forces that fears subside; and sometimes only for the moment.

Police Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) teams do not conjure up the same images of abrogation of fundamental human rights and dictatorial repression that elite military units do. In fact, unless the threat is beyond the capability of the police to adequately address, citizenry are quite uncomfortable with the military executing operations normally within the purview of the police; moreso if such operations continue over an extended period of time.

This leads then to the question of, “what safeguards may be instituted to control these forces that have the potential to seize power for themselves and hold the nation to ransom?”

One of the first conditionalities to be satisfied then must be the creation of capabilities at multiple levels to respond to potential crises. This does not necessarily advocate the establishment of redundancies. Rather it is geared at defining progressively higher responses, which in turn will aid in the control of an incident and the forces used to mitigate the threat posed by the incident. This includes the adequate equipping of the police to deal with any threat, short of an invasion, facing the country. At the minimum, the police must be able to respond to any threat as the agency of first response. The police should also have graduated response levels within their organization to address such threats. Progressive responses may then include joint police/military operations (first with police primacy, and second with military primacy), followed by purely military direction, control and action. These options must be complemented by the required oversight bodies within the constabulary, the military and the ministry responsible for National Security/Defense. These various levels of control afford governments multiple options in dealing with crises, and prevent crisis management from being firmly ensconced in the domain of one particular body or grouping. As the Report of the

National Task Force on Crime (1993, p. 23) states, “a bi-polar distribution of coercive authority is a safer guarantee against challenges to constituted government”.

Secondly, while it is desirable to limit the involvement of the military in policing functions, when they are committed to such actions they must be assiduously controlled and withdrawn once the threat has been mitigated. Similarly these forces should not be used wantonly, but rather in as parsimonious a fashion as circumstances allow. This has the effect of, assuring the citizens of the continued observance of the status quo of civil-military relations, communicating the gravity of the threat facing the country, and demonstrating control of the most lethal practitioners of force in the country. Complementary to these arguments are the benefits to be derived from keeping the profile of SOF on the national radar at a minimum, chief among which are reducing to a bare minimum the exposure of SOF capabilities and assets.

In developing countries, where the role of the military involves frequent support to the police and the deployment of troops in response to diverse conditions (disaster relief, civil unrest/disobedience, industrial unrest, high crime rates et al), high levels of training and professionalism, coupled with a multifarious skills set can enhance the effectiveness of such a grouping. Gray (p. 156) indicates that:

Excessive focus on a specific mission or missions may lead to the development of overly specialized special operations forces, which – in their own way – may reflect as rigid and orthodox a mentality as the nominally regular armed forces.

This concept calls for a small grouping to possess a wide cross-section of skills in order to be prepared for any eventuality.

Whether acting in pursuit of foreign policy objectives or acting within its borders, SOF requires sound, actionable intelligence in order to be effective. The providers of this intelligence may be either internal or external to the SOF. However, SOF should have access to and be guided by national intelligence assets in the execution of their missions. The observations of the National Task Force on Crime in 1993 that, “sustained penetration of the criminal underworld is almost non-existent” (p. 25) is not far from what obtains today, although there have been improvements in this regard. This penetration will have to be conducted by state agencies and their operatives (including



the military in support of the police), in order to provide the best intelligence for operations conducted by SOF or other state agencies.

## **E. CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Despite the “conventional” use of SOF in pursuit of foreign policy objectives, the military in developing countries have been intimately involved in domestic security issues. In particular SOF, because of their unconventional approach to solving unorthodox problems, with their hallmarks of adaptability, improvisation, innovation and self-reliance, offer decision makers a higher degree of utility than GPF, and so are often involved in internal security matters. This “guarantee” however, heightens the possibility of SOF being used excessively and inappropriately, as well as too much emphasis being placed on SOF, resulting in the deterioration of the capability and utility of other state agencies/assets. The use of SOF in a domestic role requires even greater oversight and control than in foreign missions, as well as a unified chain of command that is well-educated as to the utility and employment of SOF.

With the emergence of transnational threats as the major source of destabilization to many countries around the world, conventional security infrastructures are proving inadequate in securing the state. In order to avoid the possibility of SOF having a monopoly on addressing such threats, there must be an efficient intelligence infrastructure upon which multiple levels of response capabilities may be developed and launched into action, ultimately ending in the military. Additionally, the involvement of the military, moreso SOF, should be limited from the point at which the police can no longer effectively address the threat, to the point where the threat has been removed or negated.

The guarded use of SOF in the domestic security environment is crucial to maintaining the status quo of civil-military relations in democratic societies. Jamaica is no exception and has the advantage of being able to learn from the mistakes of other countries where SOF have acted to the detriment of the country. All efforts should be

made to institute the required safeguards and mechanisms to ensure the efficient and effective functioning of SOF in Jamaica, as she seeks to establish a secure environment in which the national goals and objectives of the country can be met.

## **IV. CASE STUDIES**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

#### **1. Cases**

In order to better ascertain the roles of SOF in national security matters, it is logical, if not natural, that an examination of actual case studies be undertaken in order to determine if there are any relevant deductions which may be distilled from what practices already exist. This task has proven to be as elusive as expected for several reasons. In the first instance, given the strategic value of most SOF to their respective governments, information on their activities and roles are very closely guarded, and the detail required for a study such as this is not readily available. Secondly, SOF have traditionally in theory and in practice, been more active in the pursuit of foreign policy objectives than in domestic security issues. Consequently, most of the material available on the roles and activities of SOF does not address their functioning within the borders of their own country; if there is indeed a role. Thirdly, for most countries in which SOF do have an active role in national security issues, less than adequate documentation and accessibility to resources concerning SOF is the norm.

Notwithstanding these significant challenges, it is imperative that an effort be made to examine and analyze the roles which SOF play in the domestic security of sovereign countries. An exercise of this nature has manifold benefits. Firstly, it will record data on a subject which has hitherto suffered from a paucity of documentation and analysis. Secondly, it will provide a basis of assessment; a crude benchmark of relevance, for this current study and the potential for further development of academic thought on the matter.

The use of case studies is by no means expected to be definitive as to the roles of SOF in national security issues, and in particular those directly affecting the security environment within the borders of any particular country. Rather, it is expected that they will allow one to draw or infer reasonable deductions and conclusions as to the possible contribution and solutions which SOF may or may not offer in addressing the threats to the security climate in a country in a satisfactory manner.

## **2. Case Selection**

In identifying the cases for examination, it was considered essential that all efforts be made to identify and examine potentially relevant case studies that would lend their deductions and conclusions to the development of this study. Cases were primarily selected based upon characteristics similar to Jamaica's security climate, and from which parallel assumptions and conclusions could be made. Thus, the overarching criteria for selection was based upon the threats facing a particular country being similar to those facing Jamaica; these being in no particular order, terrorism, the narcotics trade, and organized crime.<sup>24</sup> It is to be noted that the perpetrators of organized crime in Jamaica, do not simply engage in their nefarious activities simply for the economic gains commonly associated with these activities. There is also the element of anarchy being wrought through fear and terror, which is designed to undermine the ability of the state to provide security for its citizens and in so doing, to perpetuate the conditions conducive to the continuation of a lawless society and an inherently weak state, vulnerable to subversive elements of the organized crime ilk or otherwise. Other criteria considered included similar socio-economic conditions in the countries to those present in Jamaica, and in one particular case, that of the United Kingdom, its historically long relationship (both politically and militarily) with Jamaica, and in particular its military doctrinal legacy along which the Jamaica Defence Force has continued to develop.

It is based on these considerations that the countries selected are The United Kingdom, Singapore, Ecuador and Peru.

In addition to the long historical connection between the United Kingdom and Jamaica as previously described, there are lessons to be grasped from one of the few developed countries with a professional military, which has used its SOF to deal with the domestic threat of insurgency and terrorism within its borders. The protracted and fairly well documented role of the SAS and SBS in Northern Ireland in countering the Irish Republican Army (IRA) made this selection a valuable undertaking.

Singapore has an unusually large military for its small physical size and population, and a flourishing economy, both of which do not bear any resemblance to the

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<sup>24</sup> These were cited by the Minister of National Security, Dr Peter Phillips at the launching of the National Security Strategy for Jamaica on 26 March, 2004 in Kingston, Jamaica.

corresponding sectors in Jamaica. However, having chosen a particular path for its economic development and recognizing the critical importance of security in meeting its national goals, it is faced with threats similar to those facing Jamaica. Singapore is located in a region where terrorist movements and narcotics trafficking flourish and which together present a credible threat to Singapore's well-being and security. It is for this reason that Singapore too merits inclusion in this study.

Ecuador and Peru are both located in the Sub-Andean Region (SAR), and are themselves constantly facing the challenges of addressing the production and trafficking of narcotics and the attendant side effects of this malady. The activities of the *Sendero Luminoso* – *SL* – (Shining Path) and the *Tupac Amaru* (MRTA) guerrillas in Peru are well documented, as are the activities of the narco-terrorists and other subversive elements either indigenous to Ecuador or which cross the borders from Colombia and Peru. Both countries may also be considered as sharing similar socio-economic conditions with Jamaica, such as struggling economies, high levels of poverty and relatively weak state institutions. While Jamaica does not have a recognized insurgency, the levels of violence and terror-based activities perpetrated by the SL and the MRTA in Peru are very similar to like activities taking place in Jamaica; these activities being carried out by various gangs and crime syndicates, which the local constabulary has had difficulty in coming to grips with on its own. The growth and export of marijuana in Jamaica, coupled with the transshipment of cocaine from South America through Jamaica, have resulted in the security climate in Jamaica being affected in much the same way that Ecuador is affected. These countries, which use SOF in combating these threats, are deemed worthy of an examination in relation to this study.

### **3. Methodology**

In developing these case studies, extensive use was made of open primary source documents where available, as well as secondary sources. All efforts were made to verify the authenticity of secondary sources on particular points. Interviews were conducted

with persons connected with the SOF of these countries, in order to obtain as close to accurate and relevant information as possible.<sup>25</sup>

The cases will be organized into four sections; overview, structure, roles and responsibilities, and an analysis. The overview will give a brief history of the establishment and development of SOF in the country as well as the general threat assessment for the country. The structure will focus on the components of the SOF grouping and the command and control relationships and mechanisms used in the direction and employment of this grouping. The examination of the roles and responsibilities are aimed at identifying the specific threats which the SOF is intended to meet, their *modus operandi* and how they are integrated into the national security strategy of the country in order to meet these threats effectively. The final section of the case, analysis, will focus on the suitability of the SOF in combating the threats identified. The analysis will be based on Chris Lamb's (1995) criteria for employing SOF; specifically, (1) does the mission have as a necessary condition for success the requirement that it be undertaken by SOF, and (2) will the odds of mission success increase if performed by SOF?<sup>26</sup> Conclusions will be drawn insofar as they are relevant and have applicability for the Jamaican context.

## **B. UNITED KINGDOM**

### **1. Overview**

British military forces have conducted special operations throughout its history, using a variety of force types. However the origins of the modern UK SOF are to be found in the Second World War. Captain David Stirling's "L Detachment", which worked alongside the Long Range Desert Group (LRDG), was the forerunner to the Special Air Service (SAS). The Royal Marines Boom Patrol Detachment formed in 1940 was the forerunner to the Special Boat Service (SBS). Similarly, Winston Churchill authorized the formation of an amphibious force for raiding purposes during

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<sup>25</sup> These interviews were conducted primarily with officers either directly involved with the SOF of the chosen country, or who have an intimate knowledge of the roles of SOF in national security in the respective countries; most of these officers are current students or recent graduates of the Naval Postgraduate School.

<sup>26</sup> These criteria are elaborated upon in his article "Perspectives on Emerging SOF Roles and Missions", *Special Warfare*, July, 1995.

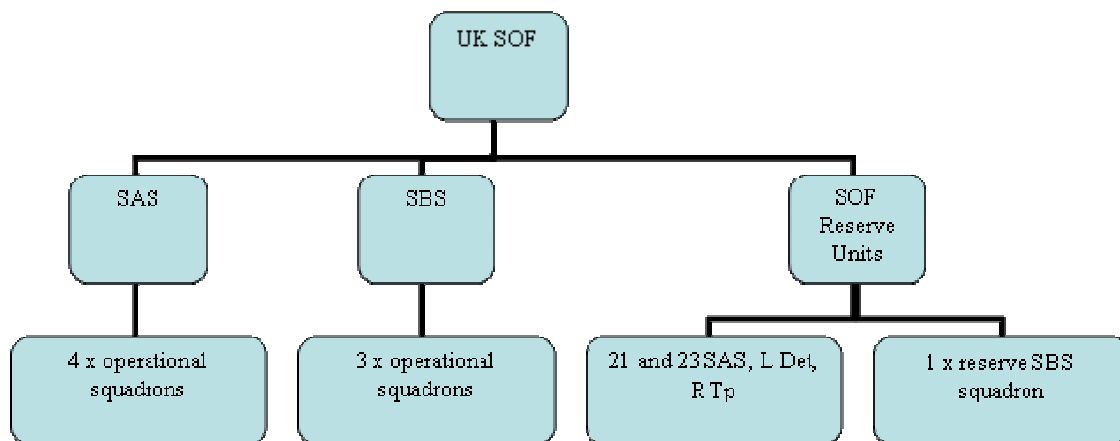
that war, which became known as the Royal Marine Commandos. Today, all members of the SBS are recruited from the Commandos. Given the level of debate surrounding whether or not the Commandos are in fact SOF, this review will focus solely on the SAS and SBS as the SOF of the UK.

Both the SAS and the SBS are trained and equipped to act deep behind enemy lines or in hostile or denied territory to strike at targets of critical tactical, operational or strategic importance. While the list of their exploits outside of the UK is lengthy and for the most part fairly well recorded, the focus in this chapter will be on their roles within the UK.

The Ministry of Defence - UK White Paper (Dec 2003) asserts that there are “no major conventional military threats to the UK or NATO – but the threat from proliferation and international terrorism remains very real”. As such, the paper continues that “We must be more prepared for asymmetric attacks by both state and non-state actors [thereby necessitating the need for] ... Special Forces capability elements to ensure we are able to conduct limited national operations” (Ch III, p. 7). Specifically these include “Specialised counter-terrorist operations, including hostage-release; and operations in Northern Ireland [in support of the Civil Powers]” (p. 8). It is these threats which the UK SOF are focused on within the borders of the United Kingdom.

## 2. Structure

The elements of UK SOF as outlined in the previous section may be depicted as shown in Fig. 1 below.



**Figure 1. UK SOF Elements**

In 1987, the UK Special Forces Group, consisting of the SAS and the SBS, was established, in a move to better manage and utilize the SOF assets and to improve command and control (Special Operations.com, n.d. [a], Special Boat Service - History section). The decision-making process for employing UK SOF is quite clear as outlined by the Ministry of Defence – UK (2004) in the *Strategic Defence Review*.

In the UK, the Home Office is responsible for counter-terrorism policy, and the lead for domestic security lies with the civil agencies - and particularly with the police. [Consequently] Any support provided by the Armed Forces, and especially the use of force, must be at the specific request of the civil authorities. Our work has been and will continue to be undertaken firmly within the framework of that principle.

According to Adams (1987, p.167), the domestic and overseas operations of the SAS are controlled by a cell in the Ministry of Defence (MOD) called the Joint Operations Center (JOC). However, when they are involved in the resolution of a crisis, control passes to a unit known as COBRA (after the Cabinet Office Briefing Room) chaired by the Home Secretary and comprised of representatives from a number of government ministries and agencies.

The four Sabre (operational) squadrons of the SAS are each comprised of four troops, each with their own specialty (mountain, air, boat, and mobility). The troops are further broken down into four man patrols, with each individual having a specific area of expertise and responsibility - demolitions, medical, signals, and language (SpecWarNet.com n.d. [a], UK Special Air Service - SAS Troop/Individual Skills section). This general task organization coupled with the skills sets of the SAS, affords the flexibility common with most SOF, to quickly and suitably configure for any such operation.

The SBS is organized similarly to the SAS, having three squadrons (one – M Squadron – is specifically designated as the counter-terrorist squadron), each of which has a multiplicity of task organization options and skills sets at its disposal (Special Operations.com, n.d. [a], Special Boat Service - History section).<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> The squadrons can operate in 16-man troops, eight-man boat loads, four-man patrols, or two-man canoe pairs.



### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

Having gained great experience in counter-insurgency operations in its formative years (primarily Malaya 1948 -1960, as well as in Borneo, Aden, and Oman), the SAS, and to a lesser extent the SBS, have been deployed in Northern Ireland since the start of the “Troubles” in 1969. Over the years they have developed tactics, techniques and procedures to counter terrorist activities, ensure both VIP protection and protection of key facilities (such as oil rigs in the North Sea), and a myriad of other tasks for which conventional forces are neither task organized nor trained. They have been used in hostage rescue (Iranian Embassy in London in 1980), and in subduing a prison riot (at Peterhead prison in Scotland in 1987). The UK SOF stand ready to mitigate any threat to the internal security of the UK for which other state agencies are ill-equipped.

Internally, the roles of the SAS have been defined as conducting low intensity warfare operations (N. Ireland), special internal security operations as required, and counter-terrorism operations as directed (MOD – UK, 2004). All squadrons are rotated through the Regiment’s Counter Revolutionary Wing (CRW) – also known as the Special Projects (SP) team - for a six month period, thereby giving the Regiment a robust and responsive capability in this regard. The title of CRW may be misleading as the squadrons also hone their counter-terrorist (CT) skills during this rotation. Technology is a critical force multiplier and is used significantly to enable troops to attain relative superiority in their operations. The Operations Research Unit of the SAS provides technological support for the Regiment through the development and adaptation of unique equipment for use in operations (Special Operations.com, n.d. [b], Special Projects Team - CRW section).

The primary roles of the SBS include maritime special operations, intelligence gathering, observation, underwater attack, beach reconnaissance/survey, and sabotage. Secondary roles include providing a maritime counter-terrorist capability and a general-purpose special operations unit. It is also actively involved in support to British Customs and Excise in counter-drug operations (Special Operations.com, n.d. [a], Special Boat Service - History section).

As the reserve elements of the SAS, 21 and 23 SAS are uniquely specifically tasked with long range reconnaissance as well as Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR). L Det and R Troop are geared primarily toward providing IBCR's (Immediate Battle Casualty Replacements) for the regulars – 22 SAS (SpecWarNet.com n.d. [a], UK Special Air Service - TA SAS and R Squadron section).

#### **4. Analysis**

The re-organization of the SOF command structure in 1987 has not appeared to debilitate the flexibility of the SOF in their response to any threat environment. At the first indication of an incident that may require the involvement of SOF, the respective commanders begin to make their preliminary assessments and preparations in anticipation of orders from the Special Forces group commander, JOC or COBRA. The availability of other government agencies such as Her Majesty's Royal Customs and Excise, the Diplomatic Protection Group, the Anti-Terrorist Branch, the Special Branch, the Firearms Unit, and Royalty Protection, among others, provides the British government with multiple options addressing a crisis. This has helped to define the mission profiles for UK SOF and to establish guidelines for their deployment.

Since the commencement of its involvement in Northern Ireland in 1969, most of the operations of UK SOF have remained classified, thus inhibiting any reasonable attempt at evaluating the effectiveness and suitability of the SAS and SBS in this theatre of operations. UK SOF have been deployed in overt, conventional roles in N. Ireland, as well as in a clandestine role, with surveillance and ambushes being their primary missions (Neillands, 1998). As part of the Intelligence and Security Group which comes under the Army Surveillance Unit, the SAS surveillance missions appear to have provided meaningful intelligence to the British Army leading to the disruption of IRA operations. Their ambushes have been far more controversial and have resulted in political fallout for the British Government over several botched operations.<sup>28</sup> In spite of the collateral effects of their offensive operations, the SAS had numerous successful operations against the IRA and placed them on the defensive. Factors such as time constraints, force size and skill sets, made the SAS the best equipped, trained, and

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<sup>28</sup> As Neillands elaborates, these operations include the killing of innocent civilians such as William Hanna (Jun 1978), 16 year old John Boyle (Jul 1977), and James Taylor (Sep 1977) in ambushes against suspected IRA operatives.

organized force to execute these specific missions, given the nature and MO of the enemy. The intelligence capabilities of Special Branch and the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) were not providing the level of intelligence required; hence the deployment of the SAS. Generally, the roles and missions assigned to the SAS and SBS have satisfied the criteria established by Lamb in determining whether or not they are being properly employed.

The Iranian Embassy hostage rescue operation, conducted in full view of the media, established the relevance and credibility of the counter-terrorist capability of the SAS. The SP team was the only grouping capable of executing the governments order to rescue the hostages. There were no other military or paramilitary forces that possessed the expertise required.<sup>29</sup> The 1987 Peterhead prison riot saw the SAS using non-lethal weapons (smoke and stun grenades and batons), to restore order within the prison, including releasing hostages held by the prisoners. With the government looking for a non-lethal response to quell the rioting, the SAS provided the best option. Their close-knit teamwork, expertise in unarmed combat and non-lethal weapons, and their ability to think outside of the box in unconventional situations made them the best option for resolving the situation.

The command and control of UK SOF as outlined, has guaranteed a certain measure of appropriateness in the use of SOF in the United Kingdom. The unique nature of the missions required that SOF be the force employed to execute these missions. The skill sets, experience, and task organization of the SOF units significantly increased the possibilities of success, and will most likely continue to do so in the foreseeable future. The variety of military and paramilitary options available to the UK government has helped in critically defining the role of each agency/organization contributing to the security landscape in the United Kingdom.

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<sup>29</sup> The Anti-Terrorist Branch and the Special Branch of the Metropolitan Police are primarily investigative and advisory groups which are not equipped to conduct operations such as the hostage rescue.

## C. SINGAPORE

### 1. Overview

Since declaring independence in 1965, the tiny island nation of Singapore has had to make the defense of its territory and protection of its national interests a priority. This republic of approximately four and a half million people on a miniscule piece of real estate (240 square miles), is surrounded by its much larger neighbors; Malaysia (127,000 square miles, 24 million people) and Indonesia (741,000 square miles, 224.7 million people). As an economic leader in the South East Region of Asia, its vulnerability is emphasized by its location and size. As Dr. Tony Tan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense for Singapore stated in 2000, “Singapore’s position as an international hub for various activities also makes us more porous and vulnerable to a diverse range of security threats, including unconventional threats...” (Ministry of Defence - Singapore, 2005).<sup>30</sup>

National defense, based upon the principles of deterrence and diplomacy, has always been a priority for Singapore, utilizing all resources at their disposal to contribute to that effort. Consequently, the professional, all volunteer military is augmented by a conscript force (national service) which allows the Singaporean government to mobilize over 300,000 soldiers in a crisis. The Singaporean Government operates on a concept of ***Total Defence***, in order to enhance its ability to protect its territory and interests (Ministry of Defence - Singapore, 2003).<sup>31</sup> It places a high degree of importance on collective security arrangements and is a member of the Five Power Defence Arrangement, which includes the UK, Australia, Malaysia and New Zealand. It also has bilateral security arrangements with major players in the region such as Indonesia, its largest neighbor.

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<sup>30</sup> This comment was made during a speech by Dr. Tan on 15 Feb 2000 at the launch of the book *Defending Singapore in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, at the SAFTI Military Institute.

<sup>31</sup> The five pillars of Total Defence are; Psychological, Social, Economic, Civil, and Military Defence.

The major threats facing Singapore that may require a military solution are the activities of the numerous terrorist and subversive organizations to be found in the region,<sup>32</sup> as well as the drug traffickers of the “Golden Triangle”.<sup>33</sup> The establishment of the Singaporean SOF in 1984 was undertaken to specifically address the threat posed by the terrorist groups operating in the region (Huxley, 2000, p. 126). Several elements of the Singaporean SOF, inclusive of the Naval Diving Unit (NDU), the Special Operations Forces (SOF) and the police Special Tactical & Rescue (STAR) unit, are tasked to address the unconventional threats which face the country. The police STAR (which comes under the Singapore Police Special Operations Command - SOC) are used primarily in hostage situations, VIP protection duties, counter-sniper operations, and to counter other violent criminal activities (SpecWarNet.com, n.d. [b], Singapore Police Force, SOC STAR section). The SAF SOF is primarily focused on countering the threat posed by terrorist and insurgent groups and their related activities, while the police, customs, and other regular military units tackle the threat posed by the drug transshipment trade. The most notable operation of the Singaporean SOF to date has been the hostage rescue aboard a Singapore Airlines plane on 26 March, 1991, in which all 123 hostages were rescued and the four Pakistani terrorists killed (SpecialOperations.com, n.d [c], Singapore – Commandos section).<sup>34</sup>

## **2. Structure**

While the Singaporean Armed Forces (SAF) are the backbone of one of the pillars of the Total Defence policy of Singapore, its unconventional components are relatively small. SAF has a Commando Formation consisting of SOF and a commando battalion.<sup>35</sup> The exact size of the SOF is unknown, but they are organized in platoons for training,

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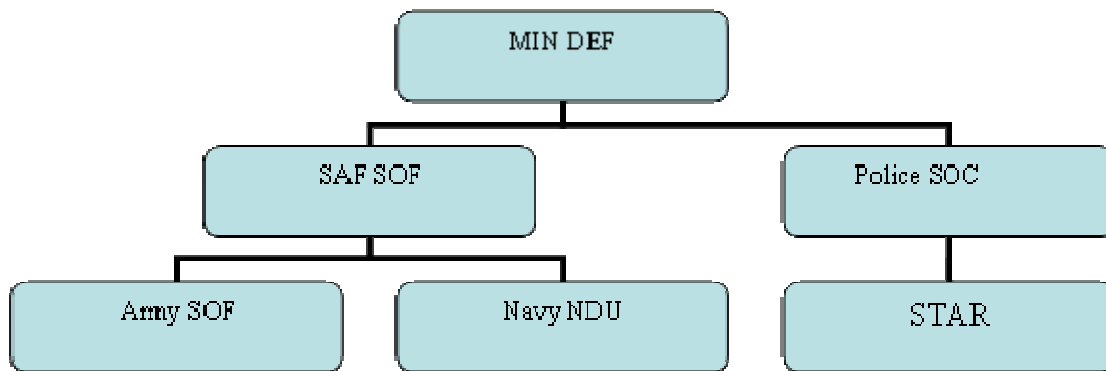
<sup>32</sup> Abu Sayyaf and the MNLF of Malaysia, and the FRETELIN, GAM and Jamaah Islamiya of Indonesia are among some of the more active groups in the region.

<sup>33</sup> The tri-border region of Myanmar, Thailand and Laos is notorious for its production of opium, and as a major source of heroin for the large western markets of Europe and North America. Singapore with its major deep water port and its high volume of commercial shipping is a major transshipment point for the opium traders.

<sup>34</sup> The hijackers threatened to kill one hostage for every ten minutes in which their demands were not met. Within three minutes of this threat being issued the order was given for the assault to proceed. The smoothly executed operation lasted only thirty seconds.

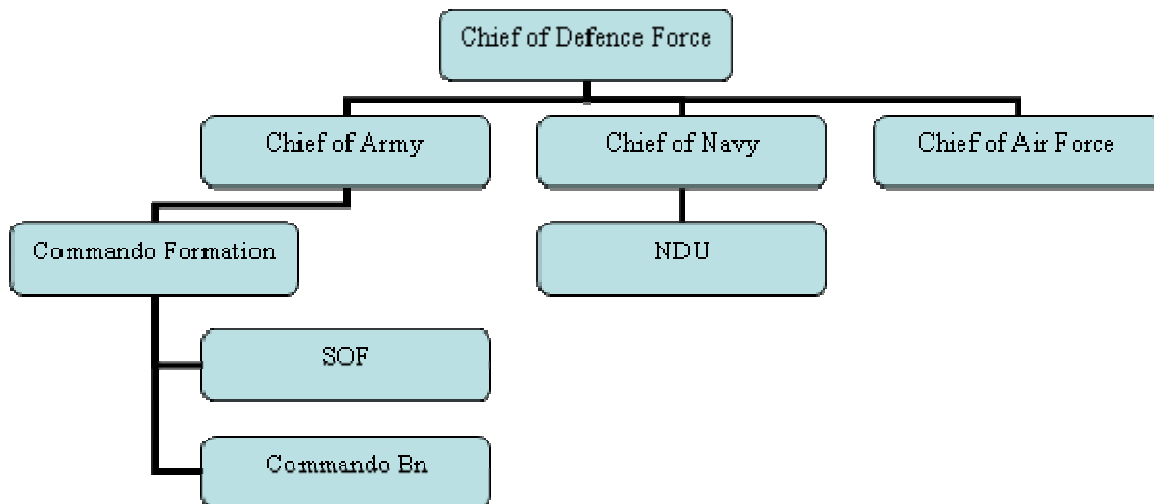
<sup>35</sup> The Commando battalion is made up of conscripts who serve for two and a half years. Their main role is to practice and be prepared for conventional war fighting, including amphibious and terrestrial raiding operations.

and task organized for specific missions. Each platoon trains for a specific counter-terrorist capability in addition to exercising in a wide range of skills required by SOF. Fig. 2 gives a representation of the SAF SOF elements. The SOF are the unit with primary responsibility for land based threats, although they do possess proficient amphibious capabilities. The NDU is tasked with the conduct of all maritime special operations. They too are capable of executing land based operations.



**Figure 2. Singaporean SOF Elements.**

The command and control of the SOF may be as depicted in Fig. 3 below.



**Figure 3. Command and Control of Singaporean SOF.**

The Minister of Defense is the person who ultimately decides if SOF are to be used in resolving a crisis situation. This is normally done in consultation with the Cabinet and on the advice of the hierarchy of the SAF. Before the SOF are deployed, the

Chief of Army is required to make a presentation on the particular operation to the Minister of Defense. The Minister then decides, based on the presentation, if the SOF are to be deployed on the mission.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Singaporean SOF's primary mission is countering terrorist activities. To this end, they have developed mission-specific training activities and have engaged in proactive operations to mitigate threats. They continuously develop and rehearse contingency plans for possible terrorist activities. These include being an integral force component of any significant conference security grouping (such as meetings of ASEAN Heads of Government). They also prepare for hostage rescue from aircraft and government buildings. They are prepared to take over responsibility of threats, whether local or international, which the local police are not capable of handling. There is a pre-determined hand-off procedure between the police (SOC-STAR) and the SAF SOF.

The SOF are mandated to engage in intensive training exercises, both locally and overseas in order to maintain their proficiency levels. They conduct joint training with SOF from other nations on a regular basis. Members of the SOF also receive individual training from the SAS, U.S. Special Forces and Navy SEALs, as well as from the Israeli SOF with whom they have had a long standing training arrangement.<sup>36</sup> Singaporean SOF conduct the selection and initial training of new members of the SOF, as well as develop training programs for mission specific activities.

Singaporean SOF rely on the centralized intelligence assets of the SAF as well as national level intelligence assets for their basic intelligence requirements. However, the SOF recce element does have trained intelligence collectors who are tasked to fill any gaps in the intelligence provided. This allows the SOF to refine their intelligence estimates and their battlefield picture in preparation for executing a mission.

### **4. Analysis**

Despite their low level of operational commitment, the SAF SOF contributes to the Singaporean defense policy of deterrence. Their reputation as well trained special operators, and the overwhelming success of the 1991 hostage rescue, coupled with a

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<sup>36</sup> The Israeli military was instrumental in the design and development of the SAF. The SAF (including its SOF) is modeled off the Israeli concept of national defense.



general lack of knowledge of their specific capabilities has augured well for Singapore. In the case of the Singapore Airlines hostage rescue, the Police SOC determined very quickly that they did not have the required capabilities to resolve the situation and thus, in keeping with pre-arranged procedures, handed over responsibility to the SOF. Having shadowed the police from the beginning of the crisis, and having refined their extensively rehearsed training scenarios to fit the current mission, the SOF were well prepared to undertake the mission. The results justify the use of the SOF.

The “unknown quantity” attribute of the Singaporean SOF has been maintained by the informed and guarded use of the SOF by the military and political authorities. They have resisted the temptation to employ them in roles for which other military and police units are equipped. As such, this has allowed the SOF to train extensively for “unconventional” missions and to develop the skill sets and attributes so essential in determining the effectiveness of SOF.<sup>37</sup>

As a small but critical component of national defense, in a country whose primary focus is security, the SAF SOF will continue to play a key role in the security environment of Singapore. Their skills, training and the continued judicious use of their capabilities, will provide successive governments of Singapore with yet another option, in their multi-layered complex of defense security arrangements, in effectively mitigating unconventional threats.

## **D. ECUADOR**

### **1. Overview**

Since its establishment in 1830, the Republic of Ecuador has faced several significant challenges to its national security. Foremost among these have been the border conflicts with Peru. In a bold move in 1941, Peru invaded Ecuador and occupied more than half of the country. Under the Protocol of Rio concluded in 1941, Peru was allowed to keep most of the occupied territory, inclusive of the mineral and resource rich

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<sup>37</sup> William H. McRaven in *Spec Ops (1996)* defines these attributes as courage, boldness, intellect, and perseverance.

Cordillera de Condor.<sup>38</sup> Subsequent military actions over this disputed region occurred again in 1981 and 1995, leading to another treaty being signed in 1998.

The Ecuadorian military has played an active role in the domestic political arena. There have been military dictatorships, military backed presidents and several military coups aimed at controlling the political directorate. Since the “final handover” of governance to civilian authorities in 1979, the military has kept a close watch on the political stage and has often exercised their considerable influence in the form of military tutelage.<sup>39</sup> The continued involvement of the military in the political sphere, albeit in a behind the scenes role, is still a credible threat to the stability and democratic processes of Ecuador.

The emergence of the *Alfaro Vive* guerrilla group in 1986 was short-lived. Its violent actions and terrorist activities were quickly thwarted by the military and by 1989 the movement had been persuaded to lay down arms through a series of negotiations with the government. Throughout its history, Ecuador has endured significant social unrest. The primary causes of this have been the struggles of the indigenous people groups for recognition and representation, industrial unrest, racial disharmony between the Indians and the rest of the population, and student demonstrations (GIS, n.d. [a], Ecuador Country File).

More recently, Ecuador has had to contend with the activities of narco-terrorists from Bolivia, Peru and Colombia who have crossed the border and conducted operations in north-east Ecuador. They are primarily active in the area around the confluence of the Putumayo and San Miguel rivers.

The origins of Ecuadorian SOF may be traced back to selection and training of the first paratroopers in 1955 and the first para-commandos in 1957. As the numbers of personnel qualified in these areas grew, efforts were made to bring them together under one central command. This was eventually achieved in 1975 with the formation of the

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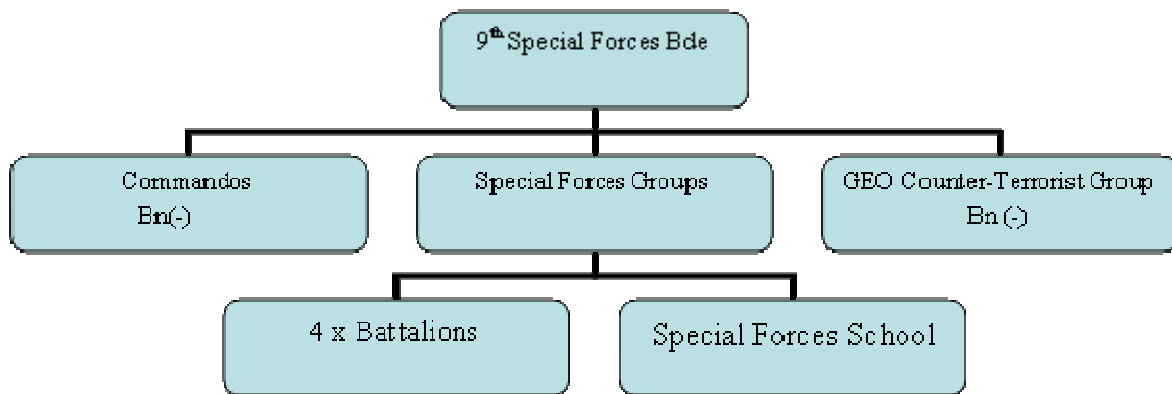
38 The sponsors of the treaty, USA, Chile, Argentina and Brazil were anxious to have the conflict not destabilize the region. Ecuador, though unhappy with the terms of the treaty had no choice but to sign.

39 Barry Buzan et al, in their work *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (1998), describe this as one of the models of military involvement in Latin American politics. See Appendix A for a definition of the term.

Brigade of Special Forces (Escobar, 1992).<sup>40</sup> Since that time, they have been used in a variety of roles, both conventional and unconventional, in contributing to the security of Ecuador.

## 2. Structure

SOF in Ecuador come under the 9<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Brigade and consist of three primary groupings; the Commandos, the Special Forces Groups (SFG's – each of which consists of a battalion-sized unit) and the Counter-Terrorist Group (GEO). Fig. 4 shows the structure of the Ecuadorian Special Forces.



**Figure 4. Ecuadorian SOF Elements.**

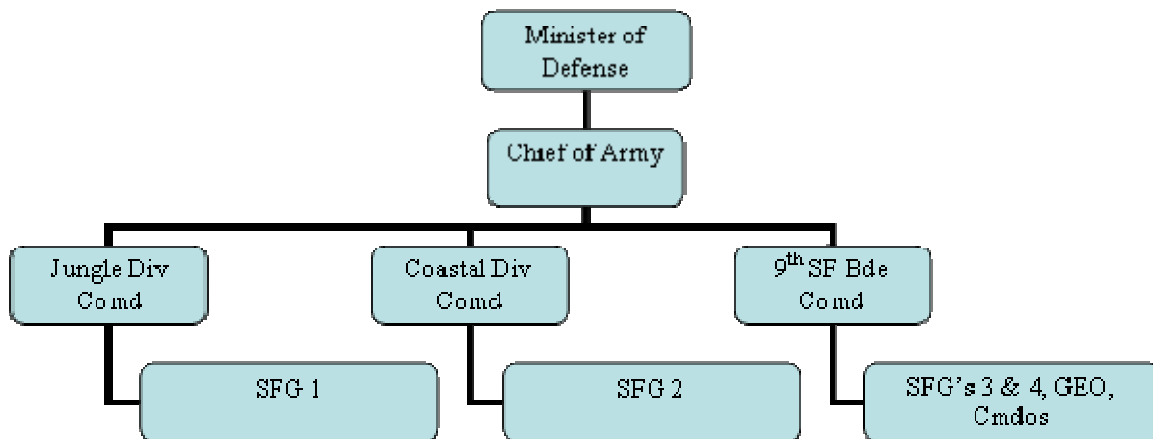
The Ecuadorian Army has four divisions, each with a geographical area of responsibility. The divisions with responsibility for the coastal and jungle regions each have one of the Special Forces battalions under command. They have the freedom to employ their SOF assets as they see fit within their operational plans. The task organization of these SOF battalions with the divisions is permanent. The detached SOF battalions may be supported or relieved temporarily by the other SOF battalions. Each group (battalion) is comprised of three companies, each having three platoons. The other

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<sup>40</sup> Col Escobar was one of the original members of the brigade, having been among the first graduates of the 1st paratrooper course in 1955.

two divisions of the army may request the support of the remaining groups for operations as they arise. Fig. 5 depicts the command and control structure of the Ecuadorian SOF.

All Ecuadorian SOF elements are parachute qualified, and are proficient in counter-guerrilla, jungle, and special reconnaissance operations. The GEO, in addition to these skill sets and capabilities, are trained in counter-terrorism operations and are the primary unit responsible for responding to such situations. The commandos have a more diversified, but specialized skill set, which includes combat diving, pathfinding, mountaineering, and the training and handling of war dogs.



**Figure 5. Command and Control of Ecuadorian SOF.**

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

The primary role of the SFG's is to support the division commanders in their operations; conventional or unconventional. Typically they are held in reserve and only employed for operations which the regular forces are not equipped for, or those operations for which a high degree of importance is attached to the successful outcome of the mission, such as countering kidnappings and narco-terrorist activities (fairly common occurrences in Ecuador).

During the border clashes with Peru, the SOF elements were held in reserve to counter the anticipated threat of Peruvian airborne troops.<sup>41</sup> Today, they have continued to operate on that principle, where the bulk of the SOF elements are held in reserve under the commander of the 9<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Brigade (these elements include the GEO, Commandos and the two SFG's not under command of the jungle and coastal divisions).

After the 1998 treaty with Peru (following the 1995 border clashes), Ecuadorian SOF shifted their focus from preparing for “conventional special operations” against Peruvian forces, to countering the activities of the narco-terrorists crossing the border from Colombia. This was made official in July 2000 when the Foreign minister announced that the SOF were to be deployed in defense of some 600 kilometers of the border with Colombia (GIS, n.d. [a], Ecuador Country File).

The SOF have also been used extensively in quelling internal disturbances arising from social unrest. During these times they have conducted joint operations with the police, legitimized under special legislation wherein the Minister of Defense authorizes their deployment on internal security operations in emergency situations.

#### **4. Analysis**

Ecuadorian SOF have never been deployed outside of the country, neither have they had any large-scale unconventional threats within Ecuador. It is thus that traditionally, Ecuadorian SOF have found themselves performing more conventional than unconventional operations, and operating in support of the police. Their chain of command is indicative of their “conventional” profiling and operations. The parceling out of some of the SOF elements prevents misuse and abuse by the political authorities, but enhances the prospects for misuse by the military commanders. This is evident in the high degree of conventional operations conducted by the SOF.

While Ecuadorian SOF are usually employed generously in the conventional arena, they are also actively involved in addressing the threats posed by the narco-terrorists and kidnappers. These mission profiles indicate that the Ecuadorian SOF may be considered more as “hyper-conventional forces”, rather than *bona fide* SOF.

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<sup>41</sup> In the 1941 invasion of Ecuador, Peru employed paratroopers to seize objectives deep within Ecuador. This was the first time paratroopers had been used on the South American continent. Subsequently, Ecuador has always been wary of this Peruvian capability and has sought to have their best troops in reserve to counter this threat.

The primary operations of the Ecuadorian SOF have not been to mitigate unconventional threats, even though they are trained and equipped to take on these situations. Given that they have the best equipment and the best troops, they have been employed more for their high skill levels and when a fair guarantee of success is imposed. According to Lamb, this represents an inefficient use of SOF, as those tasks could have been executed by well trained conventional forces. It is important to note however, that the significantly higher levels of training and equipping of the SOF do offer a commensurately higher degree of mission success on specified operations, as compared to the regular forces. This aspect results in their involvement in these tasks falling into the criteria established by Lamb, thereby justifying their use.

The Ecuadorian case, exemplifies the role and value of a highly trained and equipped unit, within a larger force which is less well trained and equipped. Countries with armed forces faced by strict budgetary considerations may choose to consolidate resources in a relatively small but effective unit. The cost of such a decision however, may be the “inappropriate” use of SOF for conventional missions as opposed to unconventional missions, and the consequent degradation in skills sets and capabilities required for unconventional missions associated with such employment.

## **E. PERU**

### **1. Overview**

Since declaring independence from Spain in 1821, Peru has had a troubled national security climate. It has been involved in several cross border conflicts,<sup>42</sup> as well as having to deal with the threats of local insurgencies,<sup>43</sup> military coups,<sup>44</sup> and the destabilizing activities of the coca growers. The Peruvian military has played a significant role in countering the rebel insurgents and terrorists, as well as the drug producers and traffickers. Although cross border relations with Chile, Ecuador and

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<sup>42</sup> These include, the War of the Pacific with Chile from 1879 – 1884, border clashes with Colombia in 1930, and Ecuador in 1941, 1981 and 1995 over the disputed Cordillera de Condor region.

<sup>43</sup> 1982 saw the emergence of the quasi-Maoist *Sendero Luminoso* (Shining Path) guerrilla movement in the Ayacucho province, and 1984 witnessed the arrival of the *Tupac Amaru* Revolutionary Movement (MRTA). Both groups continue their insurgent activities in present day Peru.

<sup>44</sup> 1962, 1968 and 1975 all saw military coups, as the military exerted its considerable influence in the politics of Peru.

Colombia remain tense, the major threats to Peru's national security are the activities of the terrorist insurgent groups of the *SL* and the *MRTA*, as well as the cocaine traffickers.

For Peru's military and police forces, the most serious continuing national security challenge was the domestic insurgency, in which the *SL* accounted for over 80 percent of the 9,184 terrorist incidents from 1985 through 1990, and the *MRTA* for most of the rest (AllRefer.com, n.d., Peru - National Security section).

Since the emergence of these insurgent terrorist groups, the military, and in particular, Peruvian SOF, have been integrally involved in the campaign against these groups (GIS, n.d. [b], Peru Country File).<sup>45</sup> SOF have been instrumental in tracking down and capturing key leaders in these rebel movements (GIS, n.d. [b], Peru Country File).<sup>46</sup> Most notably, and to the surprise of most of the world, Peruvian SOF were instrumental in the highly successful hostage rescue operation at the Japanese Ambassador's residence on 22 April, 1997, in which all fourteen guerrillas of the *MRTA* including its leader Nestor Cerpa were killed (SpecialOperations.com, n.d. [d], the Final Assault section).<sup>47</sup>

The various SOF components have had their genesis at different stages of the development of the Peruvian Armed Forces. In each instance, they were created to meet specific threats, either independently, or in support of other units/commands. The FOES (the Naval SOF), the youngest of the SOF units, had its origins in the Underwater Demolition Teams (GRUDES), established in 1969. By 1985, this was expanded to include the Special Operations Group (GOES), which was established to address the threat of the guerrilla movements and to develop a capability for unconventional warfare integral to FOES.

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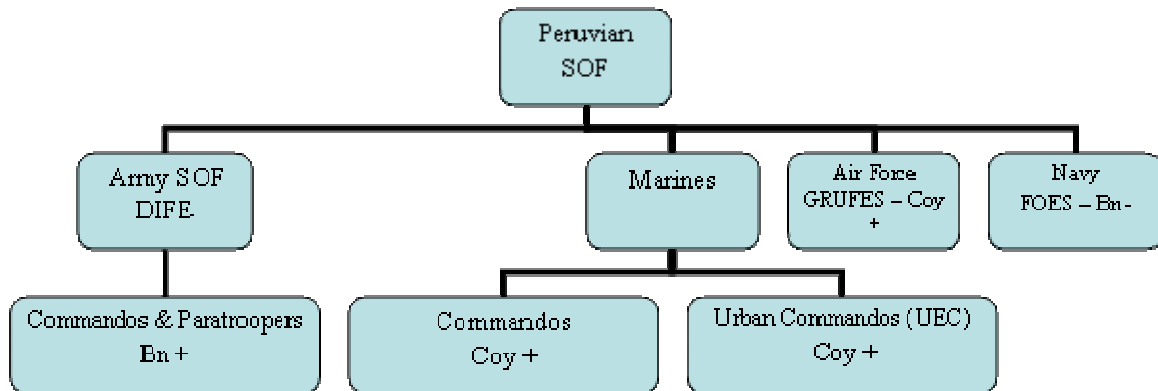
<sup>45</sup> In July 1989, President Garcia announced that he was going to formally commit the military to the fight against the *Sendero Luminoso* insurgency.

<sup>46</sup> The most notable of these are the capture of; Osman Morote, second-in-command of *SL* in Jun 88; Victor Polay Campos, leader of the *MRTA* IN Feb 89; Abimael Guzman, founder and leader of *SL* in Sep 92; Rosa Angelica Salas de la Cruz, *SL* Central Committee member in Aug 93; and Mauricio Gutierrez Camonez, alias Favio, and Grimaneza Mendoza Cardenas, alias Nelida, commanders in the *MRTA* in Jan 97.

<sup>47</sup> On 17 Dec 1996, *MRTA* rebels stormed the Japanese Ambassador's residence and took 500 guests hostage. The stand-off lasted until April, 1997 by which time all but 72 hostages had been released. In an operation lasting only 22 minutes, Peruvian SOF stormed the compound with the loss of only one hostage, two soldiers, and 9 wounded.

## 2. Structure

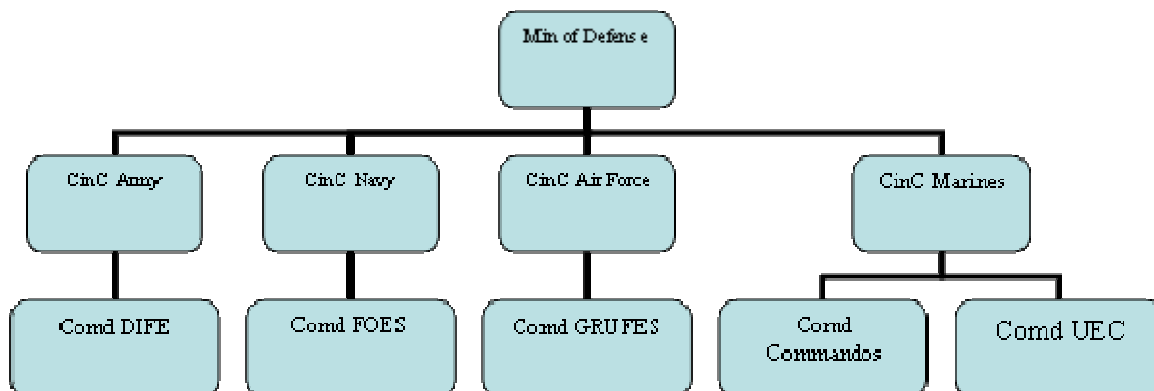
SOF in Peru are spread throughout the services of the Peruvian Armed Forces; Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines. Fig. 6 below shows this composition and the relative strengths of each component.



**Figure 6. Peruvian SOF Elements.**

Each of the SOF components is considered a command unit on par with other commands in its service, in the sense that the commander of the SOF unit reports directly to the commander of that service; even though the size of the SOF element is considerably smaller than the other commands within that particular service. Fig. 7 depicts the layers of command and control of Peruvian SOF.





**Figure 7. Command and Control of Peruvian SOF.**

As indicated in Fig. 7, each SOF component reports directly to the Commander-in-Chief of the service branch, from whom the chain of command extends upwards to the Minister of Defense. The commanders of the services form the Joint Chiefs of Staff, which is chaired by one of the chiefs on a rotational basis. However, there are occasions when the Minister of Defense, and in extreme circumstances, the President, may order the employment of any SOF element on a specific mission. Ordinarily though, the employment and command and control of the SOF component is directed by the service commander.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

Peruvian SOF are employed in a variety of ways, which may be broken down into two main categories; special operations and conventional, routine military taskings. The special operations include search and destroy missions, intelligence gathering, the dismantling of the “popular committees” established by the *SL* around the country, and locating and capturing leaders in the *MRTA* and the *SL*. The more routine conventional taskings include patrolling, convoy and VIP protection, and any other task which is deemed either necessary or convenient for them to undertake. It should be emphasized, however, that these conventional taskings are by no means permanent, but are in fact sporadic and represent a misuse of SOF.

Prior to 1996, Peruvian SOF were primarily used in counter drug operations. They were supported in this task by the local police and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (U.S. DEA). However, this role was shifted to the police in 1996 in order to allow the SOF to focus on counter-insurgency and counter-terror operations. SOF units are often integrated for various operations. The ZULU detachments (platoon strength) used to counter the drug traffickers often consisted of a mix of FOES, Marine commandos and Marine UEC personnel. Other operations have seen various, and at times ad hoc, groupings of the SOF elements. The hostage rescue operation at the Japanese Ambassador's residence was undertaken by Army SOF, Marine commandos and the UEC. The quelling of the prison riot organized by the SL in 1986 was conducted by the FOES, Marine commandos and the UEC. While the FOES, UEC and Marine commandos retain their unit integrity after completing initial training, Army SOF are re-integrated into conventional units and task-organized for special operations as they arise

Although Peruvian SOF do not have any integral intelligence components in their structure, they are often tasked on intelligence gathering missions. These missions are either designed to build on basic intelligence provided by Peruvian central intelligence assets, or to collect intelligence in areas where a void of information exists. From time to time, central intelligence assets are deployed with them on operations to assist in real time intelligence analysis and dissemination.

Each SOF element has its own training school and is responsible for the selection and training of potential members. They also conduct and supervise further developmental or mission specific training for its members. Very rarely is there cross training among units. Thus the FOES training school conducts its own parachute training and does not rely on the Army SOF/parachute units to train its members in this particular skill.

Peruvian SOF do not possess any peculiar powers such as powers of arrest, and operate under the same constitutional framework as do the rest of the Peruvian armed forces. They are allowed to detain persons suspected of insurgent activities, or involved in the production and trade of narcotics for a maximum of 48 hrs. During this period

they are allowed to conduct questioning to collect field intelligence which may be relevant to the mission being executed.

#### **4. Analysis**

The Peruvian SOF have undoubtedly played a significant role in addressing the threats posed by the insurgents and the drug producers and traffickers. They have captured or removed key leadership figures in the *MRTA* and the *SL*, smashed insurgent infrastructure, and forced the insurgents into a survival mode by their offensive operations. The variety of options presented by the various components through their training, equipping, and organization, have provided the capacity and flexibility required to effectively engage these destabilizing forces utilizing unconventional methods. The Truth Commission has noted that at the start of the insurgency, the Peruvian Armed Forces were only equipped to deal with conventional threats. The utilization of the SOF in this regard led to better efficiencies and effectiveness and reduced the possibilities of human rights abuses (Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Peru, n.d., Final Report). Additionally, the decision to task the SOF with counter-insurgency/counter-terror operations primacy has resulted in specific capabilities and experience levels being developed.

Despite the overall effectiveness of the Peruvian SOF, there still exist conditions that hinder the performance of these units. The first is the competition among SOF elements. Very often, service commanders will lobby for certain missions to be tasked to their SOF elements in order to raise the relevance and profile of their branch. This sometimes results in the wrong force being tasked for a mission.<sup>48</sup> Secondly, the tasking of SOF with routine conventional type taskings, reduces the time available to SOF for mission specific and contingency training. It also has the effect of lowering the morale and diminishing the desire of the members of the SOF to continue being a part of the unit. Consequently, attrition levels have begun to rise sharply as SOF members have opted out of an artificially induced high stress level environment. This, however, is not unusual in militaries where the best trained forces are often called upon to bear the brunt of the

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<sup>48</sup> During the Embassy hostage crisis, the Army CinC lobbied for the Army SOF to undertake the mission even though they were the least prepared of all the SOF. This was a prime example of parochial military exertions which could have proven costly. Ultimately, it was the Marine UEC that trained the Army SOF and brought them up to the required levels of proficiency, and the combination of all elements of Peruvian SOF (with the exception of the FOES which did not participate), which triumphed.

work.<sup>49</sup> The experience and expertise lost due to the attrition is not easily replaced. Finally, SOF units have often found themselves tasked with duties not remotely considered connected with their capabilities and *raison d'etre*, at the behest of the political directorate. These tasks often reflect the lack of appreciation by politicians of the strategic value of this force, and the need for enlightenment in this regard.

Although there are repeated instances of Peruvian SOF being misused, these cases are in the minority when compared to their proper employment as SOF as defined by Lamb. SOF were the only units capable of countering the unconventional threat posed by the narco-terrorists and the insurgents. Their training, equipment and experience, along with the enhanced likelihood of mission success validated their employment in those roles.

The dispersion of Peruvian SOF elements across the Peruvian military, under different commands, has contributed to an unhealthy competition among the services. Given the competition among the branches of service, the rotating chairmanship of the Joint Chiefs does not help in reducing the potential for misuse of the SOF. Additionally, the duplication of training resources across the branches leads to multiple redundancies and inefficiencies. A unified SOF command will likely reduce the current frictions among services and enhance efficiency. The re-integration of army SOF to regular line units does not augur well for unit integrity, maintenance of high skill levels and proficiency, and individual identity, purpose and commitment to missions (as exemplified in the hostage crisis). Training for a variety of situations requires constant practice and development of new procedures as the technological and threat environments evolve.

Peruvian SOF will undoubtedly continue to be involved in the security of the nation well into the Twenty-first century. Their efficiency and effectiveness will be largely determined by the attitudes of the political and military authorities towards SOF, and the professional conduct of the SOF themselves.

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<sup>49</sup> Merrill's Marauders, were frequently called upon to execute conventional operations, often against conventional forces, because they were the best troops around and were the only hope of obtaining a favorable result. History shows that this misuse of SOF seldom works out in their favor.

## **F. CHAPTER SUMMARY**

All the case studies reveal the necessity of having and maintaining a force capable of addressing threats outside of the conventional realm. The value of such a force is largely determined by its selection, training, and equipping, leading to a multiplicity of skills sets and task-organization options. These attributes coupled with the moral factors of courage, boldness, perseverance and intellect, result in SOF expanding the choice of options for decision makers in a crisis.

The structured levels of control of such a force, and the existence and suitability of alternate force options, are the best guarantees against the abuse and misuse of SOF by both political and military authorities, as is highlighted in the British case. When these conditions are not met, SOF tend to be used in the role of elite, or even “light” forces, which ultimately detracts from their core responsibilities. The “parceling-out” of SOF units to other conventional military formations (as in the case of Ecuador), or the independence of service specific SOF (as in Peru) do not augur well for the most efficient use of SOF. Such situations may result in SOF being given conventional taskings because they are the best trained and equipped forces available, or the inappropriate selection of a particular SOF force for a mission for which other SOF forces are better suited. Multiple SOF units are best controlled under a central command with specified command relationships, and have a specific mission profile area staked out for them, as is the case in the UK and Singapore.

The skills sets and task organization of SOF units must possess inherent multiple options for decision makers confronted with any possible set of circumstances. They must be capable of acting on their own initiative, but in the full trust and confidence of the powers that be, in order to maximize their ability to respond quickly and effectively to any threat. These attributes are critical to the relevance and effectiveness of SOF.

Training for SOF is paramount and should be continuous. The investment made in specific and contingency training should be as broad-based and expansive as possible, as this is what equips and prepares the SOF for any possible scenario. Exposure in a variety of training environments and exercises, as well as joint training with other SOF is crucial to the flexibility and situational awareness required of SOF.

Training should always be ongoing and progressively developmental, and ought to take priority over the urge to commit SOF to conventional taskings, which would reduce the time available for training.

Proper oversight and control of SOF will have an impact on their judicious employment and management. The establishment and functioning of such groupings in the military and the political directorate, who understand the ramifications of the employment of SOF is critical, especially in societies where civilian control of the military is paramount. These groupings must be established prior to (or at the very least, concurrent with) the establishment of the SOF. A failure in this area may result in the misuse and abuse of SOF, ultimately leading to their roles being undermined and even discredited. Worse, a lack of appreciation for the capabilities of SOF by its masters may, in extreme cases, even set SOF up to “rebel” against its political masters.

The value of SOF within a country’s borders can only be realized by their proper employment and efficient command and control relationships, within a broader security context. The diverse capabilities, flexible structure and the definition of clear mission profiles of SOF are not only essential in maintaining the civil-military relationships in democratic societies, but perhaps at the top end of the spectrum of response mechanisms available in crisis management, offer the only credible guarantee of mitigating threats to national security.

## **V. CONCLUSION**

### **A. FINDINGS**

Despite the common identification of the employment of SOF with the pursuit of foreign policy, SOF also contribute to national security within borders, especially in developing countries. Their stage of development and level of domestic involvement however, tends to depend on a number of factors inclusive of, the level of economic development of the country and the availability of resources, the commitment to democratic principles by the country, and the options available to a government for addressing threats to the nation's security. The rise of transnational threats to the top of the heap in these developing countries (over the traditional threats), have significantly challenged the ability of the traditional security infrastructure in these countries to effectively mitigate these threats. More and more, SOF in these countries are being used to counter these threats which threaten the stability and attainment of policy goals in these countries. Jamaica is no exception, and as such has undertaken a review of its security agencies (JCF and JDF), concurrent with developing an integrated and relevant National Security Strategy (NSS).

In the conduct of this process, the NSWG has identified specific threats facing Jamaica for which there are inadequate or non-existent response mechanisms. These threats include terrorism, organized crime, and the illicit trafficking of narcotics and weapons. The NSWG has considered specifically mandating the JDF to be the lead agency in responding to a terrorist threat/crisis. While it proposes that primary responsibility for the other threats remain with the JCF, prudent observation would recognize the assistance that the JDF has provided to the JCF in mitigating such threats, and should inform the development of an enhanced capability to continue providing this assistance. It should also be noted that the responsibility for the territorial waters of Jamaica, from a half mile offshore outwards to its outer limits, would become a primary mission of the JDF, given its superior air and maritime capabilities over the police.

The asymmetric nature of these threats, demands the development of a capability to counter them. Observed practices from the case studies presented, and from the

global community, indicate that this capability, while not confined to the military, is perhaps best accommodated in the military. The historical application and management of lethal force to counter threats, so embodied in a warfighting ethos as is unique to the military, inclusive of an ability to vary the intensity of the application of force, makes a persuasive argument for the military to possess such a capability. Further, based upon a system of graduated response capabilities, beginning with basic law enforcement and ending with the employment of military forces, the military should possess such a capability, the hallmarks of which should be its organizational flexibility - attained through diverse skill sets, specialized training and equipment, and the general robustness of the human elements.

History has shown the importance of the proper management and employment of SOF; moreso in democratic societies. The inherent risks implicit in a SOF require the institution of safeguards and mechanisms to ensure the maintenance of acceptable civil-military relations. The history of “special units/squads” in both the JCF and JDF are ample evidence of the possible pitfalls to be avoided. Every effort must be made not to repeat the mistakes of the past. Thus, the possible roles of the SOF must be clearly identified and the criteria for their deployment established from the outset. Critical oversight, firm control, the availability of alternate response mechanisms to crises, and the proper selection, equipping and training of SOF, will effectively mitigate the legitimate concerns associated with employing SOF in a democratic society. Consequently, the organization and structure of a JDF SOF should be developed within this context.

## **B. RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. Developing and Establishing the Concept**

While envisioning a reorganization and strengthening of the JCF and the JDF in keeping with the ultimate directions provided by the NSS and the corollary strategic reviews of both organizations, it is recommended that the JDF develop a Special Operations (SO) unit, to enable it to more fully meet its mandate of the “defence of Jamaica and the maintenance of order in Jamaica”, given the current and projected threat



environment. This unit (to be established under Section 6 of the Defence Act – 1962) may be suitably established with due consideration being given to the following points:

1. An education process for decision makers in the JDF and the Ministry of National Security, as to the purpose, capabilities and best use of SOF, based on observed best practices.
2. The identification and/or establishment of appropriate oversight and control mechanisms for SOF within both the JDF and the government.
3. The employment of the SO unit should be predicated largely on the provision of accurate, actionable intelligence.<sup>50</sup>
4. The declaration of a firm commitment to properly select, equip, train and maintain this unit.
5. The institutional raising of the standards and capabilities of regular units, through the provision of training modules, the execution of joint missions (GPF and SOF), and the transfer of persons from the SO unit to the regular units at the end of their careers in the SO unit.
6. the establishment of defined hand-over/take-over procedures between the SO unit and the JCF, and the JDF GPF and the SO unit, for a variety of situations.
7. The development and enactment of legislation, empowering this unit to act independently of the JCF, but affording it the same protection in Law as the JCF in the execution of its duties; in a fashion similar as to what applies to members of the Coast Guard.

Prudence would suggest that this unit be started on a small scale, and “grown” based on the subsequent need. Apart from the high costs commonly associated with developing a proficient SOF, due to equipment, training and other resource requirements,

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<sup>50</sup> It is conceivable that there may be a requirement for the SO unit to develop a capability to perform this role; especially considering the almost mandatory (and universally observed best-practice) requirement for SOF to execute confirmatory recce/surveillance/intelligence gathering missions, prior to launching on an operation.

it is essential to develop the expertise required in a tightly knit core of persons, around whom the unit may be developed and built.

The case studies presented in this paper may conceivably be used to illustrate the development and establishment of a SOF along a continuum, from “hyper-conventional”,<sup>51</sup> units to mature SOF, over the short, medium and long term as described in Table 1.

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<sup>51</sup> See the glossary at Appendix A for a definition of this term.

Time	Country	Characteristics	Remarks
Short Term	Ecuador	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SOF are used predominantly in conventional roles.</li> <li>• The main criterion for the employment of SOF is the guarantee of success.</li> </ul>	“Hyper-conventional”.
Medium Term	Peru Singapore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Units are task organized around asymmetric capabilities.</li> <li>• Tasking with conventional missions are in the minority.</li> <li>• While considered as “elite” forces in their own country, these units have not fully developed the operational experience and success of other “elite” forces.</li> </ul>	These forces may be considered “advanced” but not yet “mature” in their development as SOF.
Long Term	United Kingdom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SOF units are at the top end of a spectrum, which contains many other intervening options for decision makers, thereby facilitating tighter command and control.</li> <li>• Wide range of operational experience and international reputation for success.</li> </ul>	Mature SOF.

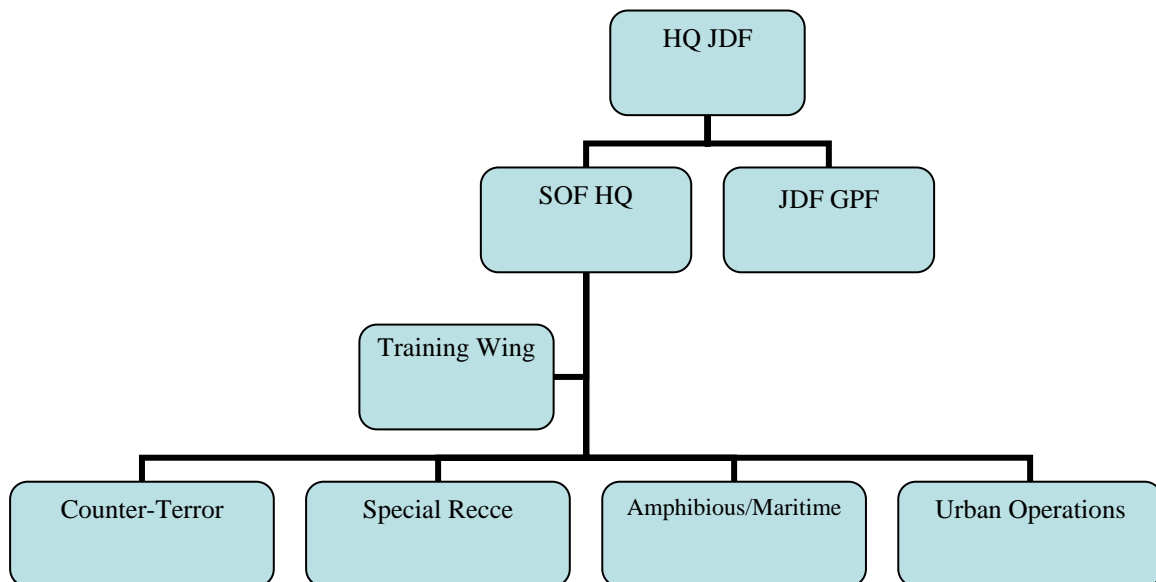
**Table 1. Development Path of SOF over the Short, Medium, and Long Term.**

A functional, mature and effective SOF, does not appear overnight. Thus, the SOF of the JDF will of necessity take several years to be established, developed, and capabilities built to acknowledged international standards. This process of development

may follow the stages outlined in the succeeding paragraphs of this chapter. The successful development of such a unit will require a commitment of resources, and a commitment to the role of such a unit in Jamaica.

## 2. Structure and Capabilities

Given the broad range of possible missions and the asymmetric nature of the threats facing the country, the SOF unit should be capable of conducting a variety of maritime, amphibious, land-based and air-mobile operations. Recommended mission sets are listed at Appendix D. Basic team skills should be diversified among members of the unit and should include combat engineer/demolitions, combat medical, language, communications, weapons specialists and sniping. Additionally, the unit should be task-organized around the capabilities as highlighted in Fig. 8. These elements should be rotated through each area of specialty every 9 -12 months to enhance the overall robustness and flexibility of the unit.

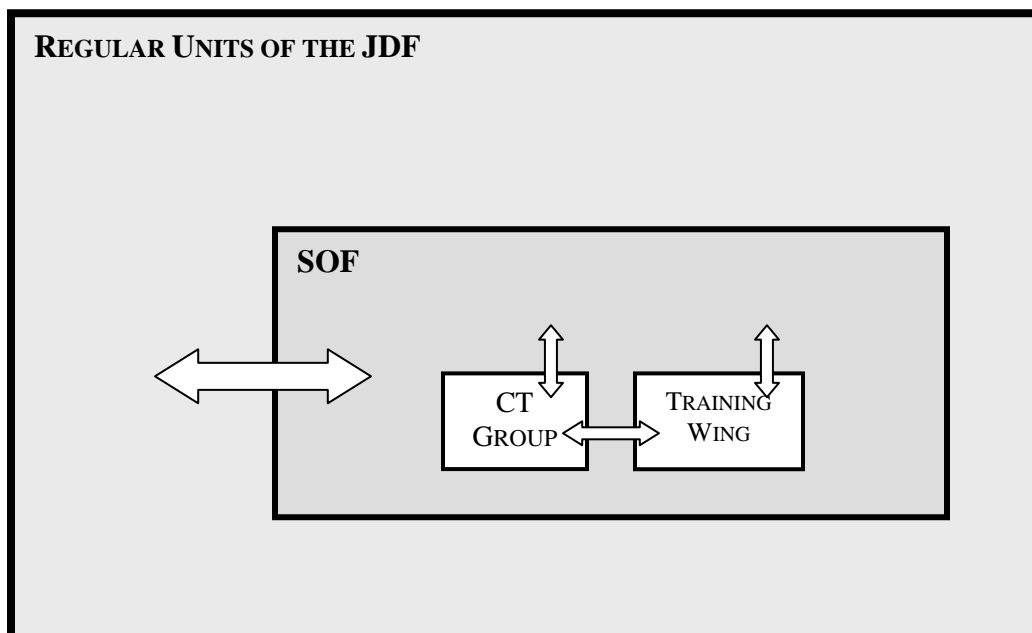


**Figure 8. Proposed Structure of JDF SO Unit and Command Relationships**

## 3. Movement of Personnel

Fig. 9 summarizes the relationship of this unit with the wider JDF, as it relates to the selection and possible movement of members of this unit. Members of this unit are

recruited and selected from the other units in the JDF, where they undergo a basic upgrading course. Based on their performance, they are either sent back to their units or remain in the unit where they undergo more extensive and specialized training, to function in one of the designated elements of the unit. While it is desirable to retain the personnel who have made a successful transition from the regular force to the SOF, it is envisioned that individuals, at some point and for a variety of reasons, may opt to return to one of the regular units. It is anticipated that such a person would be representative of the minority, but would in turn bring skills and attributes to that regular unit, which would positively impact the performance of that unit. Individuals who excel in the SOF, should be assigned to, perhaps, the most complex and challenging of the elements – counter-terror – or, in due course, make a transition to the training group. Clearly, these persons will have to demonstrate the highest standards of skill, professionalism, and physical and mental toughness. In so doing, the unit will be able to retain its best soldiers for a period commensurate with the expected return on the investment made in their training and development, and simultaneously facilitate the logical maturing of the unit.



**Figure 9. Movement of Personnel between SOF and Regular Units**

#### **4. Training**

Training for SOF is paramount and should be continuous. The investment made in specific and contingency training should be as broad-based and expansive as possible, as this is what equips and prepares the SOF for any possible scenario. Exposure in a variety of training environments and exercises, as well as joint training with other SOF is crucial to the flexibility and situational awareness required of SOF. Training should always be ongoing and progressively developmental, and ought to take priority over the urge to commit SOF to conventional taskings which would reduce the time available for training. The command and control mechanisms at both the political and operational levels will also require realistic training and exercising in decision making.

### **C. TERM OBJECTIVES**

#### **1. Short Term**

This is perhaps the most critical stage as it is at this time that the foundation of the unit will be laid. The establishing of guidelines for the employment of the unit, the process of selection of persons to serve in the unit, and discerning the vision for the functioning of the unit and the equipment, assets, and skills sets required that will be unique to it and effective in countering threats to security in Jamaica, should precede any other action in the raising of this unit.

The selection process should be geared towards identifying intelligent, disciplined, and physically and mentally robust individuals, who demonstrate what Clausewitz described as the “moral factors” of courage, boldness, intellect and perseverance. Having satisfied such criteria, these persons should undergo intensive training to heighten their proficiency in basic conventional military skills, as well as mastering new specialized skills as related to the areas depicted in Fig. 8. This represents a time consuming process but one which is essential to the ultimate success of the unit, and in which the investment must be made.

During the formative period of the unit, training will be paramount and all the energies of the unit must be focused in this regard. Established tactics, techniques and procedures (TTP's) must form the operational skeleton of the unit, around which the

utility of the unit should be built. This utility and leverage will be attained through the development of improvisation, contingency planning, and unorthodox problem solving (both mental and practical) skills, so essential to overcoming the Clausewitzian concept of “friction” which is so dominant in unconventional and asymmetric operations.

Having achieved a measure of proficiency in their new skills, this unit should be tasked with operational missions where they possess an advantage (absolute or comparative) over regular units, based on sound and actionable intelligence, and in which it is assessed they will have success. Operational experience and success are important for building up an ethos and culture of success in the unit, but should not be construed as a precedent for the employment of the unit in future operations, where success is the only factor considered in selecting the SOF unit for the mission; regular forces may be equally equipped and able to successfully execute the mission. Ultimately, the tasking of this unit for a mission must be based on the unit’s “absolute and comparative advantage” over the conventional units of the JDF; and for that matter the JCF. While there is a need for the “bleeding” of this unit on actual operations, it should not be at the expense of developing the core and specialized skills required of the unit.

At the end of this period, the unit should have developed to the point where it may be considered a “hyper-conventional” infantry unit, with a solid foundation upon which further skills and attributes of SOF may be developed.

## **2. Medium Term**

As the unit develops and matures, the emphasis should be on cementing and expanding the range of skills and competencies of the unit, and increasing their operational experience. The rotation of personnel between specialized elements for cross-training in different disciplines is essential to achieving this objective. By this time, it is envisioned that training options available at the individual, team and sub-unit levels (both locally and overseas), will be streamlined and form the core of the continued and future development of the unit.

During this period, the application of technology should begin to have a greater impact on the operations of the unit, due to increased availability and proficiency within

the unit. As an enabler and force multiplier, the provision of and proficient use of technological assets, will allow this unit to attain relative superiority in the execution of its operations.

The addition and development of new skills in the unit in this stage will see the continued movement of the unit along the continuum from basic infantry through hyper-conventional to “specialized”. By this time, the unit should have achieved an advanced level of proficiency in specialized skills sets, and their application to templated solutions for possible threat scenarios; foreseeably only requiring minor modifications for an actual operation.

Deployments on overseas missions, whether UN led or as part of a multi-national force, should be viewed as a fertile developmental environment, in which the skills of members of the unit may be honed and applied in building overall unit capacity.

### **3. Long Term**

The main difference between the unit in the medium and long term, is the degree of difficulty and complexity which the unit is able to successfully overcome. This bridge will be crossed by the increased operational and training experiences derived from both local and overseas opportunities.

## **D. CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Developing an un-conventional capability in the JDF geared towards mitigating those threats which other units and state agencies are ill-equipped or incapable of meeting, is critical to the continued relevance of the JDF to Jamaican society and to the attainment of national strategic goals. The threat posed by the transnational scourge of terrorism, arms and narcotics smuggling, and organized crime, require alternatives to the traditional security infrastructure of Jamaica, and the modernization of agents of the state that are currently charged with maintaining security. The development of a SO unit in which such capabilities may be developed and honed is one method of achieving this, but requires a process which must be rigorously monitored and managed in order to maintain appropriate civil-military relations for a democratic society such as exists in Jamaica.



For a SO unit to offer the utility and expansion of choice usually associated with such units, it must be supported in terms of a long term commitment to its development and roles, its judicious employment and the utilization of best practices, the best intelligence available, and the provision of resources to enable it to effectively execute its mission. As a unit, its intrinsic value is best demonstrated through its diversity of skills, broad range of capabilities, and organizational and operational flexibility. Given its expected role of supporting the JCF, or indeed, acting independently of them, legislation governing their employment which affords them similar protection as available to the police in the execution of their duties, is central to their functionality.

In order for this unit to maintain its credibility and relevance, a premium must be placed on accountability, efficiency, professionalism, flexibility, commitment, and sound leadership. A general de-centralization or parceling out of the unit's assets, a pattern of abuses, extra-judicial actions, misuse, and/or the rapid expansion of the unit, will be prejudicial to the unit effectively contributing to the security environment of Jamaica. Equally debilitating, is the potential for the development process to become "stuck" at the stage of a high-performing unit, which is viewed as a general panacea for all threats, without any scope for further development.

Paradoxically, the effectiveness of such a unit will be enhanced by the concurrent qualitative increase in the capabilities and effectiveness of the regular units of the JDF and the JCF. This will allow the SO unit to properly focus on those areas where it retains either an absolute or comparative advantage over the regular units in addressing various aspects of the threat environment.

The development of a SO unit will require time, commitment, patience, courage, and the provision of physical and financial resources. It is critical that the process be followed through to its logical conclusion, in order to afford the best opportunity of developing the capabilities currently missing from the existing security infrastructure of the country. Such a unit must be subject to the appropriate oversight and controls in order to maintain the primacy of civil-military relations. The JDF has had a long history of answering the nation's call in every and any circumstance. The development of this

unit with its attendant capabilities, will contribute to ensuring the relevance of the JDF to the citizens of Jamaica, and to the attainment and preservation of an environment in which Jamaica can attain her national goals.

## APPENDIX A

### Glossary of Terms

#### Absolute Advantage

A condition that exists when the expected value of conducting a specific mission is greater than the expected cost (Winters and Paro, 1994, p. 3).

#### Command and Control

(DOD) The exercise of authority and direction by a properly designated commander over assigned and attached forces in the accomplishment of the mission. Command and control functions are performed through an arrangement of personnel, equipment, communications, facilities, and procedures employed by a commander in planning, directing, coordinating, and controlling forces and operations in the accomplishment of the mission. Also called C2.<sup>52</sup>

#### Comparative Advantage

The difference in the absolute advantages possessed by both SOF and GPF in the execution of a specific mission, in order to determine who is better suited for the task (Winters and Paro, 1994, p.3).

#### Conventional Forces

[which differ from Special Operations Forces]In degree of risk, operational technique, mode of employment, independence from friendly support and dependence on detailed operational intelligence and indigenous assets (USCINCSOC Operational Concept, 1989, p. 1-8).

#### Direct Action

(DOD) Short-duration strikes and other small-scale offensive actions conducted as a special operation in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive environments and which employ specialized military capabilities to seize, destroy, capture, exploit, recover, or damage designated targets. Direct action differs from conventional offensive actions in the level of physical and political risk, operational techniques, and the degree of discriminate and precise use of force to achieve specific objectives. Also called DA

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<sup>52</sup> Those definitions beginning with (DOD) are taken from the U.S. Department of Defense Dictionary of Military Terms, available at <http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/doddict/index.html> last accessed on 22 Apr 05

### Elitism

The belief that certain persons or members of certain classes or groups, deserve favored treatment by virtue of their perceived superiority (as in intellect, social status, financial resources, capabilities or otherwise).

### Force Multiplier

(DOD) Is a capability that, when added to and employed by a combat force, significantly increases the combat potential of that force and thus enhances the probability of successful mission accomplishment.

### Foreign Internal Defense

(DOD) Participation by civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the action programs taken by another government or other designated organization to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency. Also called FID.

### General Purpose Forces

See “Conventional Forces”.

### High Performing Unit

A unit which by virtue of either its superior combat readiness due to higher training standards, morale, esprit-de-corps, leadership, functional equipment, or, a combination thereof, is considered to be comparatively better than other units of the same genre.

### Hyper-Conventional Forces

Troops who through their higher training standards and unconventional skill sets, their application of advanced equipment, and their greater experience as may typically be found in SOF, are used to bring a greater degree of precision in the execution of conventional mission sets.

### Internal Security

(DOD) The state of law and order prevailing within a nation.

### Militarization

Pre-dominance of the armed forces in the administration or policy of the state.

### Military Tutelage

Active participation by the military in the policy making process of governance, and the exercise of oversight over the civilian authorities, where rather than overtly imposing their wishes on the government, an implicit veto power by the military is sufficient to bring the civilian government to “heel” (Fitch, 1998).

### National Security

The concept of national security is much wider than the defense of Jamaica’s borders or its territorial integrity. It is the total preservation of our State: our political, economic and social well-being, the inviolability of our territorial boundaries and the maintenance of national interests.<sup>53</sup>

(DOD) a defense posture capable of successfully resisting hostile or destructive action from within or without, overt or covert.

### Relative Superiority

“Is the condition that exists when an attacking force gains a decisive advantage over a larger well-defended enemy.”  
(McRaven, *Spec Ops*, 1995, p. 4)

### Special Mission Units

(DOD) A generic term to represent a group of operations and support personnel from designated organizations that is task-organized to perform highly classified activities. Also called SMU.

### Special Operations

“operations conducted by specially organized, trained and equipped military and paramilitary forces to achieve military, political, economic or psychological objectives by unconventional military means in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive areas...” (Adams, 1998)

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<sup>53</sup> Taken from an unpublished draft document produced by the Ministry of National Security, Jamaica.

### Special Operations Forces

“are small, elite military units with special training and equipment that can infiltrate into hostile territory through land, sea, or air to conduct a variety of operations...” (Feickert, Sep 2004).

### Special Reconnaissance

(DOD) Reconnaissance and surveillance actions conducted as a special operation in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive environments to collect or verify information of strategic or operational significance, employing military capabilities not normally found in conventional forces. These actions provide an additive capability for commanders and supplement other conventional reconnaissance and surveillance actions. Also called SR.

### Unconventional Warfare

(DOD) A broad spectrum of military and paramilitary operations, normally of long duration, predominantly conducted through, with, or by indigenous or surrogate forces that are organized, trained, equipped, supported, and directed in varying degrees by an external source. It includes, but is not limited to, guerrilla warfare, subversion, sabotage, intelligence activities, and unconventional assisted recovery. Also called UW.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Threats to Jamaica's National Security**

1. Threats Relating to Crime:
  - a. Risk of the collapse of the rule of law.
  - b. The high levels of violence, particularly armed crime and homicide.
  - c. Illicit flows of arms and ammunition.
  - d. Gangs and Gang activities/warfare.
  - e. The effects of violence on communities.
  - f. Extortion.
  - g. Kidnapping.
  - h. Escape from remand facilities/correctional centers.
  - i. Community orders [illegitimate parallel governance systems].
  - j. Endemic corruption
  - k. Organized crime.
  - l. Illicit trafficking in narcotics.
  - m. White collar crime.
  - n. Smuggling and trafficking of people.
  - o. Cyber crimes.
2. Terrorism (direct and indirect).
3. Military and Para-Military Threats:
  - a. Illegal paramilitary groups.
  - b. Insurgency.
  - c. Military threats from another state.
4. Natural and Man-Made Disasters.
5. Economic Threats:
  - a. Financial crimes, including tax evasion and fraud.
  - b. Counterfeit Currency.
  - c. High crime and violence preventing increased Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and sustainable development.
  - d. International commodity and financial shocks.
  - e. Trade in contraband.
  - f. Abuses of Jamaica's intellectual and cultural property rights.
  - g. Ineffective security operations of ports.
6. Social Threats:
  - a. Erosion of social and moral values.
  - b. Poverty.
  - c. Inadequate support for vulnerable groups.
  - d. High unemployment.

- e. Disorder.
- f. Entrenchment of garrison communities and informal settlements.
- g. Alienation of youth and other groups.
- h. Recidivism.
- i. Industrial unrest.
- j. Unmanageable flow of refugees.
- k. Inadequate healthcare.
- l. HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases.
- m. Substance abuse.

7. The Effects of Education on Security.

8. Unsustainable Exploitations/Loss of Natural Resources.



## **APPENDIX C**

### **Conceptual National Strategic Security Goals**

1. To Prevent and Reduce Violent Crime and Disorder.
2. To Strengthen the Criminal Justice System and Respect for the Rule of Law.
3. To Eliminate Organized Criminal Networks and Counter the Proliferation of Narco-Trafficking and Illegal Arms.
4. To Protect Jamaica from Terrorism.
5. To protect and Control Jamaica's Territory.
6. To Strengthen the Integrity of Institutions of Democratic Government.
7. To Provide the Environment for a Stable and Healthy Economy.
8. To Provide the Environment for Effective Delivery of Social Services.
9. To Reduce the Risks of Disasters and Protect Jamaica's Natural Resources.
10. To Increase Jamaica's Contribution to Regional and International Security.

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## **APPENDIX D**

### **Proposed Mission Sets for JDF SO Unit**

Counter-terrorist operations

Hostage release

Aid to the civil powers

VIP escorts

Special Reconnaissance\Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols

Air-mobile operations (parachute and heli-ops)

Jungle operations

Urban fighting

Maritime/amphibious operations

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